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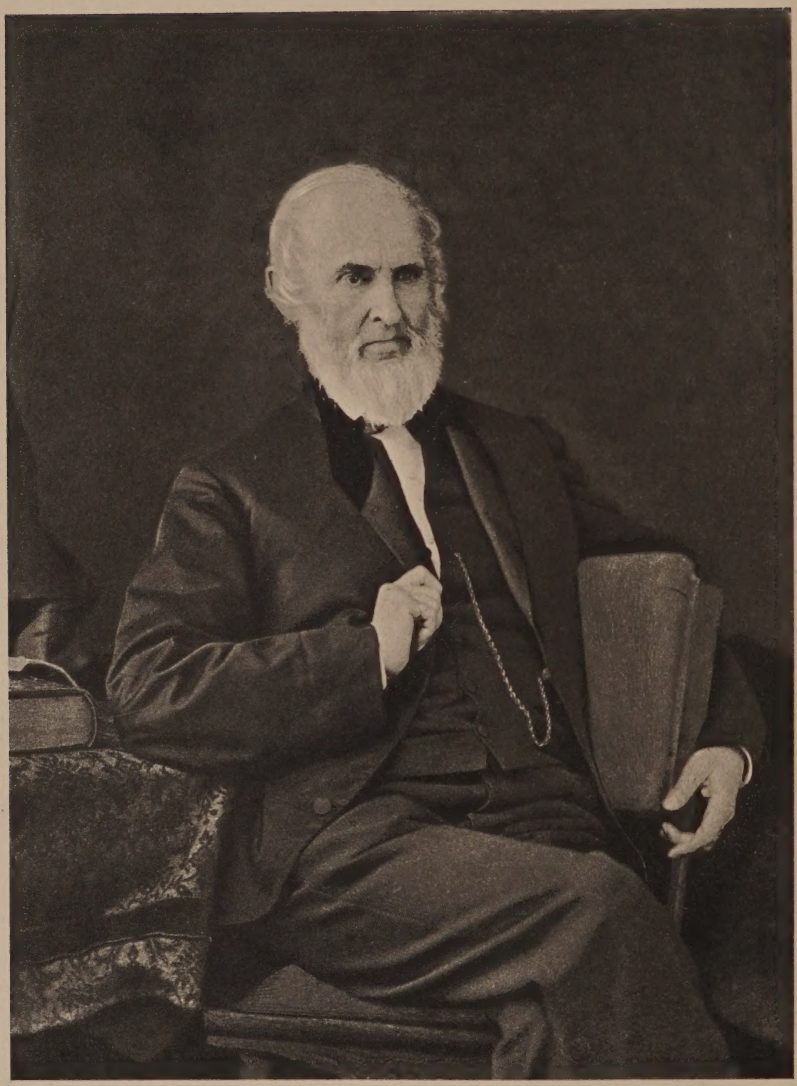
LIFE AND LETTERS OF JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER



John G. Whittier

Mr. Whittier in 1880

LIFE AND LETTERS OF JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

BY

SAMUEL T. PICKARD

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

THE present single-volume edition of the *Life and Letters of John Greenleaf Whittier* is essentially the same as the edition in two volumes that was published in 1894. Certain passages that had been found to be inexact, or open to serious doubt, have been either omitted or carefully revised in the light of fuller knowledge. In several cases, also, the editor has been able to add to the value of the biography by making use of letters which were not available when the book was written.

BOSTON, *September*, 1907.

PREFACE

THE thought that at some time the story of his life would be called for was not a pleasant one to Mr. Whittier; but fearing that, in the absence of correct data, a biography full of inaccuracies might be given to the public, about ten years before his death he authorized the collection of material for such a work, and assisted the friend to whom it was confided by suggestions of a general character. He had never kept a journal, nor charged his memory with dates, but he remembered his correspondents, and gave information which resulted in a large collection of letters, illustrating nearly every year of his life. The editor has regarded the use of this material as a sacred trust, and in accordance with Mr. Whittier's wish has allowed him, as far as practicable, to speak for himself.

In editorial work, and in his correspondence, he always expressed himself freely upon every subject which interested him. His familiar and unstudied letters have special value, revealing as they do the warmth and steadfastness of his friendships, the genuineness of his sympathy, his earnestness in philanthropic reforms, the spontaneity

of his humor, and his constant interest in public affairs.

Mr. Whittier's editorial work upon partisan papers developed a taste for politics and ambition for political preferment, as shown by letters now for the first time published. These letters do not fairly represent him when judged by the tenor of his later life, but without them we could have no true idea of his early manhood, and of the great change which marked his religious, literary, and political life when about twenty-seven years of age. Previous to this time, while irreproachable in morals, no deep conviction of duty seems to have nerved him to self-denying, heroic action. He was evidently looking forward to a political rather than a literary career. Comparatively little has hitherto been known of the first thirty years of his life, beyond the fact that he edited political papers in Boston, Haverhill, and Hartford, and it may surprise his friends of the present generation to find that he was an aspirant for congressional honors, which, but for the constitutional limit as to age, he had a fair prospect of obtaining, in a district where he enjoyed exceptional popularity. As a power in politics, even when working in a small minority, Whittier has never been rightly estimated. In several of his poems he speaks of his consecration to the cause of freedom as involving a change in all the motives of his life; but

this has not hitherto been taken so literally as it will now be seen was intended. While his serious work at this period was in politics, he was at the same time winning reputation as a poet, by verses which, though highly complimented by poets and critics of national repute, were suppressed by the more cultivated taste and judgment of his later years.

At the age of twenty-five we find him entering upon a contest in which every talent was to be used as a weapon of assault against a system which he had no reason to suppose would be overthrown in his day. In this field, the skill he had acquired in politics was not thrown away, and we can readily understand why he favored the political wing of the anti-slavery forces. With his genius for statecraft, nothing else could have been expected, and the reader can but admire the skill he exercised in keeping his despised cause before the people, and compelling the unwilling help of able men, who at heart were opposed to his aims and measures. As the trusted adviser of statesmen, the extent of his influence has never been fully appreciated beyond the circle of his intimate friends.

To those who have loved Whittier as a poet whose utterances have quickened their religious spirit, and given expression to their highest and holiest aspirations, the pages of this memoir de-

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LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

CHAPTER I.

ANCESTRY AND CHILDHOOD.

1807–1826.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER was born on the 17th of December, 1807, in a house built by his paternal ancestor, in the East Parish of Haverhill, Mass., and died at Hampton Falls, N. H., September 7, 1892. This ancestor, Thomas Whittier, was the first of his name in America, and is supposed to have been of Huguenot descent. He was born in England in 1620, and sailed from Southampton, England, for Boston, Mass., in the ship Confidence, April 24, 1638. Among his companions on this voyage were his uncles, John and Henry Rolfe, and a distant relative, Ruth Green, whom he married a few years after his arrival, and whose name appears in every subsequent generation. He settled in Salisbury, Mass., on land now within the limits of the town of Amesbury and bordering on the Powow River, a small tributary of the Merrimac. The hill which to this day bears his name

was included in the grant he received. It is a tradition in the family that he was a man of gigantic size, weighing more than three hundred pounds before he was twenty-one years of age, and he was possessed of great muscular strength. It is certain also that he had a high degree of both moral and physical courage.

He was sent as a deputy to the General Court from Salisbury, and served his town in other offices of trust. Removing across the Merrimac, he lived for a short time in the town of Newbury. In 1647, he took up his permanent residence in the town of Haverhill, and was again on the north side of the Merrimac, about ten miles above his former home in Salisbury. As before, he settled a mile or two from the "great river," and upon the bank of a small affluent now known as "Country Brook," but then as "East Meadow Brook." His first house was built of logs, and situated about half a mile southeast of the present "Whittier homestead." Here all but the eldest of his ten children were born. He had five sons, all possessing the stalwart proportions of their father, each of them being more than six feet in height.

In this log house he lived with his large family until about sixty-eight years of age, when he began to hew the oaken beams for a new and more capacious dwelling. The site which he selected was near by, upon the bank of a pretty rivulet, tumbling in a series of cascades through a ravine running along the north base of Job's Hill. In this retired and picturesque spot he built the house which he occupied until his death, November 28,

1696, and which has sheltered generation after generation of his descendants. The erection of the new house is supposed to have been in 1688. The foundations of the log house built by his pioneer ancestor, the poet used to see in his youth, but he was unable to find them when last visiting the place, in 1882.

Haverhill was first settled in 1640, and was for seventy years a frontier town, an unbroken wilderness stretching to the north for more than a hundred miles. During the first forty years of the settlement, there was no trouble from the Indians who fished in the lakes and hunted among the mountains of New Hampshire; but during the next thirty years they were frequently hostile, and Haverhill suffered all the horrors that accompany savage warfare. When these hostilities began, in 1676, Thomas Whittier had been living in his log house on East Meadow Brook for nearly thirty years, receiving frequent visits from the Indians, whose respect and friendship he won by the fearlessness and justice he displayed in his dealings with them.

When friendly intercourse with the pioneers was broken, and the savages began to make their forays upon this exposed settlement, several houses in the town were fitted up as garrisons, and we find that in 1675 Thomas Whittier was one of a committee appointed to select the houses that should be fortified as places of refuge. But though many of his townspeople were killed or carried into captivity, he never availed himself of this shelter for himself or his family, and it is the tradition that

he did not even bar his doors at night. His frame house, now standing, was built in the midst of the Indian troubles, and he had occupied it several years before the principal massacres, the records of which make the bloodiest pages in the annals of Haverhill. The Hannah Dustin affair occurred in 1697, a year after the death of the pioneer. The Dustins lived in the western part of the town, remote from the Whittiers, and nearly all the tragic events of these troublous times in Haverhill were beyond the limits of the East Parish. But the Indians in their war paint occasionally passed up the Country Brook, and the evening firelight in the Whittier kitchen would reveal a savage face at the window. But this household was never harmed.

Thomas Whittier was a contemporary of George Fox, and appears to have had much respect for the doctrines of the new Society of Friends. In 1652, he was among the petitioners to the General Court for the pardon of Robert Pike, who had been heavily fined for speaking against the order prohibiting the Quakers Joseph Peasley and Thomas Macy from exhorting on the Lord's Day. The meetings of the Quakers had been held in their own dwelling-houses. A petition against this order had been signed by many of the residents of Haverhill, and when it was presented in the General Court, a committee of that body was appointed to wait upon the petitioners, and command them to withdraw it or suffer the consequences. Some of them did retract when thus called upon, but two of the sixteen who refused were Thomas Whittier and Christopher Hussey, both of them ancestors of the

poet. The only punishment they received was withdrawal for some years of their rights as "freemen." The disability in the case of Whittier was removed in May, 1666, when he took the oath of citizenship. The franchise at this time was granted only to those who were named as worthy by the General Court. He not only had the right to vote, but was an office-holder and a man of mark in Salisbury and Newbury for many years previous to his residence in Haverhill, and had also been a member of the General Court; and there can be little doubt that the delay in conferring upon him the full rights of citizenship in the last-named town was due to doubts respecting his orthodoxy. It may be that his interest in the doctrines of the new sect carried him beyond the point of desiring for its preachers fair play and freedom of utterance, but there is no evidence that he joined the Society of Friends. Indeed, we find him in his later years acting upon the ecclesiastical committees of the church then dominant in the colony.

His capacity for civic usefulness was recognized for years before the right to vote was conferred upon him. In laying out roads, fixing the bounds of the plantation, and in other ways, his engineering skill was drawn upon. When he came to Haverhill from Newbury, in 1647, it was considered of sufficient importance to note in the town records the fact that he brought with him a hive of bees that had been willed to him by his uncle, Henry Rolfe. This incident seems emblematic of the industry and thrift which have so largely characterized his posterity; and it has furnished a

device which has been woven by some members of the family into the Whittier monogram.

His youngest son, Joseph, through whom we trace the poet's lineage, married, in 1694, Mary Peasley, granddaughter of Joseph Peasley, the leading Quaker in the town, and one of the exhorters for whom Thomas Whittier asked in vain the clemency of the General Court forty-two years earlier.[1] In the mean time, George Fox had been preaching in America, and his adherents had so increased in numbers in all the colonies that further persecution was out of the question. For four generations nearly all the descendants of Joseph Whittier retained their connection with the Society of Friends, but that some of them lost their membership is shown by the fact of their holding military titles during the wars of the eighteenth century.

The East Parish of Haverhill is one of the most rugged and hilly sections of Essex County. Two centuries ago, as now, this county was more thickly populated than any other on this side the Atlantic that included no great city. And yet, here in its northeast corner was a spot so isolated that from the date of the erection of the Whittier mansion to the present time no neighbor's roof has been in sight. Whittier refers to the seclusion in "Snow-Bound," where he says: —

> "No social smoke
> Curled over woods of snow-hung oak."

[1] The house of Joseph Peasley, Jr., the father of Mary, was built of bricks brought from England, and is still standing near Rocks Village in the East Parish. It was used as a garrison house in the French and Indian wars.

While thus shut in from the busy world, there have always been neighbors within half a mile, and when the wind favors, the bells of Haverhill and Newburyport, and the roar of the storm waves breaking on Salisbury beach, are heard in this secluded valley.

In a letter written in 1881, Mr. Whittier says of the Ayer house, which is the nearest to the old homestead, that it was built within his remembrance, and that he recollected well the old garrison house that stood in the same place. It was of two stories, with only a single room below, and two small diamond-paned windows. The door was of massive oak plank, and the entry was paved with rough flat stones. The fireplace occupied nearly one side of the room. The ceiling was unplastered.

The principal settlement of Haverhill, now a city of about 40,000 inhabitants, is three miles away. The town originally stretched twelve miles along the north bank of the Merrimac, and was six miles wide. But when the long-disputed boundary between Massachusetts and New Hampshire was settled by royal commissioners appointed in 1737, a strip only three miles wide north of the river fell to the share of Massachusetts, and the northern half was given to New Hampshire. The windings of the Merrimac are to some extent followed by the boundary line, with the result that the East Parish is inclosed in an elbow of the river. Three beautiful ponds separate it from the city proper.

The rounded, dome-like summits of the gravelly hills were in the days of the pioneers, and indeed

down to the poet's time, covered with a heavy hardwood growth, the oak predominating. In Mr. Whittier's youth there were no evergreens on the farm, except a few hemlocks. But upon clearing an acre of oaks there sprang up a growth of white pine covering the whole tract, — the only pines in the neighborhood. The noble elm not far from the house, centuries old, but still flourishing, its trunk eighteen feet in circumference at the smallest point, and casting a shadow at noonday a hundred feet in diameter, is known as "the Whittier elm."

Thomas Whittier's widow died in July, 1710. After the estate had been divided among the ten children, Joseph, the youngest, bought most of the land that was apportioned to his brothers and sisters. He died at the age of seventy, December 25, 1739, leaving nine children. His youngest child, also named Joseph, born in March, 1716, married Sarah Greenleaf, of West Newbury, July 12, 1739, and died October 10, 1796. They had eleven children, of whom five died in infancy or in youth, and only three of the others were married. The three who were married were Joseph, Obadiah, and John. Five of Joseph's children settled in Maine; seven of Obadiah's nine children settled in New Hampshire; and John, the youngest son who married, remained upon the Haverhill farm, with his younger brother, Moses. In April, 1802, John and Moses, in partnership, bought the interest of the other heirs in the estate, paying them therefor about $1700. The partnership continued until the death of Moses, in 1824.

John Whittier, father of the poet, was born November 22, 1760, and died June 11, 1830. He was forty-four years old when he married Abigail Hussey, October 3, 1804, and she was nineteen years his junior. Abigail was a daughter of Samuel Hussey, of Somersworth (now Rollinsford), N. H., and Mercy Evans, of Berwick, Me. She was born in 1779 and died December 27, 1857. John and Abigail had four children: Mary, John Greenleaf, Matthew Franklin, and Elizabeth Hussey.

Those who are curious in vital statistics may find something of interest in the following summary: Thomas Whittier was forty-nine years old when his son Joseph was born, and he lived to be seventy-six years of age. Joseph was forty-seven years old when his son, the second Joseph, was born, and he died at the age of seventy. The second Joseph was forty-five years old when John was born, and he lived to be eighty. John was in his forty-eighth year when John Greenleaf, the poet, was born, and he lived to be nearly seventy. These five lives extended over the unusual period of two hundred and seventy-two years. Although each Whittier in this list lived to good old age, they each passed away without seeing their grandsons. These were all accounted stalwart men, while he who seemed to have the frailest physique lived to be five years older than either of his Whittier ancestors. The delicacy of his physical frame and the unusual development of intellectual and spiritual force may be taken as confirmation of the theory that the older children of a family inherit a

larger share of physical strength, while the younger ones come into possession of a corresponding share of nerve and brain power.

Mr. Whittier was named for his father and for the family of his father's mother, Sarah Greenleaf.[1] His grandmother was descended from Edmund Greenleaf, who was born in the parish of Brixham, Devonshire, England, about the year 1600. The

[1] The home of Sarah Greenleaf was upon the Newbury shore of the Merrimac nearly opposite the home of the Whittiers. The house was standing until a recent date. Among Mr. Whittier's papers was found the following fragment of a ballad about the home-coming, as a bride, of his grandmother, Sarah Greenleaf, now first published: —

"Sarah Greenleaf, of eighteen years,
Stepped lightly her bridegroom's boat within,
Waving mid-river, through smiles and tears,
A farewell back to her kith and kin.
With her sweet blue eyes and her new gold gown,
She sat by her stalwart lover's side —
Oh, never was brought to Haverhill town
By land or water so fair a bride.
Glad as the glad autumnal weather,
The Indian summer so soft and warm,
They walked through the golden woods together,
His arm the girdle about her form.

"They passed the dam and the gray gristmill,
Whose walls with the jar of grinding shook,
And crossed, for the moment awed and still,
The haunted bridge of the Country Brook.
The great oaks seemed on Job's Hill crown
To wave in welcome their branches strong,
And an upland streamlet came rippling down
Over root and rock, like a bridal song.
And lo! in the midst of a clearing stood
The rough-built farmhouse, low and lone,
While all about it the unhewn wood
Seemed drawing closer to claim its own.

"But the red apples dropped from orchard trees,
The red cock crowed on the low fence rail,
From the garden hives came the sound of bees,
On the barn floor pealed the smiting flail."

. . . . . .

Greenleaf family, it is believed, were of Huguenot origin, and the name was probably translated from the French Feuillevert, as is suggested in Mr. Whittier's poem, "A Name." Edmund Greenleaf married Sarah Dole, and had several children born in England. He settled in Newbury, Mass. His son Stephen, born in 1630, married Elizabeth Coffin, daughter of Tristram Coffin, and their son Tristram, born in 1667, married Margaret Piper in 1689. Tristram's son Nathaniel, born in 1691, married Judith ——; their daughter Sarah, born March 5, 1721, married Joseph Whittier, 2d, and her son John was the father of the poet. The Harvard professor, Simon Greenleaf, descended from John, an older brother of Tristram Greenleaf, above named. The name of Whittier was spelled in many ways by various members of the family with the license that prevailed not only in this country but in England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the Essex County records may be found eighteen different ways of spelling this name. Thomas Whittier spelled it with one "t."

Mr. Whittier has himself sketched in prose, in "The Fish I did n't Catch," the old homestead in which his childhood and youth were spent. He speaks of the house as having been built about the time that the Prince of Orange drove out James the Second, and adds: —

"It was surrounded by woods in all directions save to the southeast, where a break in the leafy wall revealed a vista of low green meadows, picturesque with wooded islands and jutting capes of

upland. Through these, a small brook, noisy enough as it foamed, rippled, and laughed down its rocky falls by our garden-side, wound, silently and scarcely visible, to a still larger stream, known as the Country Brook. This brook in its turn, after doing duty at two or three saw and grist mills, the clack of which we could hear in still days across the intervening woodlands, found its way to the great river, and the river took it up and bore it down to the great sea."

Great Hill, in the immediate vicinity, which was one of the poet's favorite resorts, is one of the highest elevations in the county, from which portions of more than thirty cities and towns may be seen, with Monadnock rising dome-like in the west, and Wachusett a little to the south, while the billowy Deerfield range edges the horizon in the north, and in the east the ocean, with its white sails, may be traced from Boar's Head to Cape Ann.

The great dome of Job's Hill, which took its name from an Indian chief of the neighborhood, though now almost bare of trees, was in Whittier's youth well covered with giant oaks, which must have added much to its apparent height. This hill rises so steeply from the right bank at the foot of the garden that it is difficult for many rods to get a foothold. Its height is so great that it materially shortens the winter afternoons for the dwellers in the valley. From the left bank of the noisy brook the garden lot sloped gently upward toward the front of the house, till it met a terrace, upon which were the flower garden and the well with its ancient sweep.

A little way up the brook may still be seen the remains of a series of dams constructed by some of the earlier Whittiers, perhaps by the pioneer himself, when the water was utilized for grinding grain or sawing lumber. It is possible that Thomas Whittier, when erecting his buildings, had this water power in view, as the brook in those days before the forests were cleared away was a much larger and more reliable stream than now. The house faces southeast, and just beyond the brook the main road from Amesbury to Haverhill climbs over a shoulder of the hill, while a cross-road bridges the brook, and passes the eastern end of the house.

Between the brook and the house was a row of butternuts, walnuts, and maples, and at the gateway stood picturesque Lombardy poplars, which have now disappeared, as from most New England landscapes. The bridle-post mentioned in "Snow-Bound" is a large boulder at the left of the gateway, with a projection in its inner face that served as a step. It can be readily imagined how this bridle-post with its step and mantle of snow might suggest an old man sitting

"With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat."

The doorstone of the porch is a small granite millstone, probably one of those used in the ancient gristmill upon the hillside brook. On the opposite side of the road were the barn, a granary, and an ancient shop once supplied with a forge. The barn was built by John and Moses Whittier, when the poet was thirteen years of age. The old

barn, on the same side of the road with the house, stood for some years after the erection of the new one. Mr. Whittier once told the writer that the old barn had no doors, and the winter winds whistled through it, and snow drifted upon its floors, for more than a century. The horses and cattle were but slightly protected in their stalls and "tie-up." This was the early practice throughout New England. Our fathers, coming from the milder climate of England, had the traditional English slowness in adapting themselves to changed climatic conditions. The pioneers and their descendants for four or five generations adopted the policy of "toughening" themselves by exposure to cold, and they saw no reason for making their cattle more comfortable than themselves. Their boys were expected at an early age to take their part in the work of subduing the wilderness, and they housed and dressed themselves much as they had done in the milder climate of the mother country. Almost two centuries passed away before barns were made comfortable, and flannels and overcoats ceased to be regarded as extravagances.

Mr. Whittier was accustomed to attribute the delicacy of his health throughout life to the methods of toughening the constitution in vogue when he was a lad. No flannels were worn in the coldest weather, and the garments of homespun, though strong and serviceable, were of open texture compared with modern goods. Only a short spencer for overcoat, and mufflers and mittens were provided for extremely cold weather; and the drive to the Friends' meeting at Amesbury,

nine miles away, twice a week, on First and Fifth days, with no buffalo robes or warm wraps, was thoroughly chilling and uncomfortable, and the meeting-houses of those days were seldom provided with means of heating. These were among the hardships of the time and country, common to all classes of the people, and were endured as inevitable. But, while lamenting this needless exposure to cold, Whittier never complained of other hard youthful experiences, — the unending contest with the rocky acres of his father's farm, and the difficulties of obtaining an education.

The new barn on the Whittier estate was built in 1821, with most of our modern conveniences. This was the barn to which that famous path was cut through "a fenceless drift" that "once was road." Of late years this treasure-house of the farm has been nearly doubled in length, but the end toward the road is the same as on that December day, when the boys reached it

> "with merry din,
> And roused the prisoned brutes within."

The house built by Thomas Whittier has a heavy oaken frame, the principal beams being hewed from timber that gave a width of fifteen inches. This building is about thirty-six feet square, and built in the ancient fashion around a massive central chimney. At the northeastern corner, which is nearest the road, is a porch giving entrance to the kitchen. This room is by far the largest, as it is the most notable, room in

the house, being about thirty feet in length, and of proportionate width. What other kitchen in the world is more hallowed by associations that touch the universal heart? Its first suggestion to the imagination is the deep content and peace of a happy, united family, gathered of a winter evening around their blazing hearth-fire, while a storm rages without. The great fireplace is of itself almost as wide as the average kitchen of the present day. The chimney is broad enough at its base to allow a space of about eight feet between the jambs. The oven is at the back of the fireplace on the right side, and if there were a large fire upon the hearth, it would be difficult to manage the baking, as one must step into the fireplace to reach it. The old crane, swinging on its stout hinges at the left, and the ancient trammels and hooks remain, curious reminders of the clumsy methods of cooking in olden times. When Mr. Whittier last visited the place, the hearth was worn and broken, and the Turk's head andirons were gone. But a fire was readily kindled, and "the great throat of the chimney" made to laugh again, with its roaring draught, while in the gleam of the crackling flames

> "the old, rude-furnished room
> Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom."

On the opposite side of the kitchen is a cupboard, at which the tramp mentioned by Whittier in his "Yankee Gypsies," prospecting for brandy, filled his mouth with whale oil, and spluttered inarticulate imprecations. A little bedroom, that was

Whittier Homestead at Haverhill, Mass.

known as "mother's room," opens at the northwest corner of the kitchen. The ancient sashes with their small panes remain in most of the windows. Perhaps some of these panes in the kitchen are the identical ones through which the painted savages wonderingly peered at the stout old pioneer and his family. It was certainly through these panes that the poet saw the mimic flames that appeared to glow in the sparkling drifts outside, and told its meaning in the old rhyme: —

> "Under the tree,
> When fire outdoors burns merrily,
> There the witches are making tea."

The front rooms are the family sitting-room, in the southeast corner, and the spare room, sometimes used as parlor and sometimes as bedroom, in the southwest corner. It was in the last-named room that the poet was born. Doors into each of these front rooms open directly from the kitchen on either side of the great fireplace. The front entry is small, and the front stairs turn in a cramped space against the back of the chimney. There is a straight and steep flight of back stairs leading up from the western porch. It was down these stairs that in his tenderest infancy the poet, wrapped in a blanket, was once rolled, as an experiment, by a little girl who had charge of him.

Originally, the roof sloped on the northern side down to the first story, but this was raised in 1801 to correspond with the front. In the second story is a large open and unfinished chamber, around

which four more or less finished chambers are grouped. The boys' chamber was the little one over "mother's room," and above is a large attic, with its rafters studded with nails and pegs, from which five generations of careful Quakers have suspended braids of seed-corn, bunches of medicinal herbs, and all the articles to which the ancient New England attic is consecrate, and on the floor of which the boys of two centuries have spread butternuts, walnuts, and acorns, around the great chimney.

This was the home in which Whittier spent his childhood and youth, and where he dreamed the ambitious dreams of his young manhood. It afforded something more than the average comfort of farm life at that time. Whatever hardships he encountered were shared with the majority of farmers' families in New England. The meadows were boggy and undrained. The uplands that had been cleared of trees by the fathers were still incumbered with stumps, and strewn with boulders, large and small, which interfered with the easy working of the soil. Fair crops could be raised only at the expense of hard work. This was taken for granted, and as a rule was not shirked by the boys. Young Whittier did his share of the household chores, and as he gained strength worked with his father and uncle Moses in the fields and forests. When he last visited the homestead, in 1882, he pointed out a stone wall he helped to build, which is now standing between the brook and the gate. It is the garden wall referred to in "The Barefoot Boy:" —

"Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night,
Whispering at the garden wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall."

He attained the full height of his mature years, five feet, ten and one half inches, when he was about fifteen years of age; but he was always slender, and never strong of muscle. At the age of seventeen he sustained injuries from over-exertion in farm work, from the effects of which he never fully recovered. Some phases of farm life he always enjoyed, such as watching the growth and development of the crops, the harvesting of such as did not overtax his strength, and the companionship of the domestic animals, especially the oxen. He had seven cows to milk, and this work he never relished. Beside the cows, there were kept on the farm a yoke of oxen, a few sheep, and one horse. His mother made butter and cheese which had such a reputation that it brought much better prices than the average. Their bread was supplied from grains raised on the farm. Rye was largely used instead of wheat, and much Indian corn. The only method of threshing grain, in his youth, was with the flail, the wielding of which required more strength than he possessed.

His brother, Matthew Franklin, nearly five years younger than himself, was his superior in strength, and led off in "breaking" the steers and colts, and in other enterprises requiring bodily vigor. Of a warm summer afternoon, when no work was pressing, the top of Job's Hill was the favorite resort of the boys, and of the cattle as well. The

summit is a plateau of several acres, which was formerly dotted with large oaks. To this pasture came the cattle, to lie in the shade of the wide-spreading trees. All the winds found their way to this breezy height, and in the sultriest day the air was never stagnant. The varied charms of the fine outlook were not lost upon the young poet and his lively brother. Directly beneath them was the ancient homestead, and they could almost look down into the flues of the great chimney. A wide stretch of beautifully diversified country spreads away on all sides to a distant horizon. The dome-shaped hills peculiar to the lower valley of the Merrimac River were all about them. The southern ranges of the New Hampshire mountains could be seen at the north, and eastward rose Agamenticus, standing as a sentinel upon the coast of Maine. At the west, across the Great Pond (since christened Kenoza by the poet), were the spires of Haverhill. Southeast was a glimpse of the blue sea in Ipswich bay, with the rocks of Cape Ann beyond, and just across the Merrimac were the rolling hills of Newbury. Only five miles away, in Byfield, was the ancestral homestead of the Longfellows, where the grandfather of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born. A little to the left rose the spires of Newburyport, and the beautiful Po Hill in Amesbury, at the foot of which the poet was to find a home for more than fifty-six years, was another conspicuous feature in the wide landscape.

The boys delighted in petting the oxen, which were large ones, and seemed to appreciate all the

kindness that was shown them. They were named "Buck" and "Old Butler." On the hill was one oak so much larger than all the rest that it was called "The Oak." As the oxen lay chewing their cuds under this tree the boys would often sit on their foreheads and lean on their horns as on an armchair. Although always disposed to tease his pets, Whittier secured the love of every living thing that came under his care. Old Butler once saved his life by a remarkable exhibition of strength, and by what would be called "presence of mind" if shown by a man. One side of Job's Hill is exceedingly steep, — too steep for such an unwieldy animal as an ox to descend rapidly in safety. Greenleaf went to the pasture one day with a bag of salt for the cattle, and Old Butler from the brow of the hill recognized him and knew his errand. As the boy was bent over, shaking the salt out of the bag, the ox came down the hill toward him with flying leaps, and his speed was so great that he could not check himself. He would have crushed his young master, but by a supreme effort, gathering himself together at the right moment, the noble creature leaped straight out into the air, over the head of the boy, and came to the ground far below with a tremendous concussion and without serious injury to himself.

Another incident of his childhood, in which Old Butler figured, was once related by Mr. Whittier. Quaker meetings were sometimes held in the large kitchen at his father's house. One summer day, on such an occasion, this ox had the curiosity to put his head in at the open window and take a

survey of the assembly. While a sweet-voiced woman was speaking, Old Butler paid strict attention, but when she sat down and there arose a loud-voiced brother, the ox withdrew his head from the window, lifted his tail in air, and went off bellowing. This bovine criticism was greatly enjoyed by the younger members of the meeting.

Mr. Whittier could not remember incidents that happened before he was six years old. His first recollection was of the auction sale of a farm in the neighborhood, and he was surprised to find the next morning that the farm had not been taken away by the purchaser, and a large hole left in its place!

When he was eight years of age, President Monroe visited New England, and happened to be at Haverhill on the same day that a menagerie with a circus attachment was exhibited in that village. The Quaker boy was not allowed the privilege of seeing either the collection of wild beasts or the chief magistrate of the nation. He did not care much for the former, but he was anxious to see a President of the United States. The next day, he trudged all the way to Haverhill, determined to see at least some footsteps in the street that the great man had left behind him. He found at last an impression of an elephant's foot in the road, and supposing this to be Monroe's track, he followed it as far as he could distinguish it. Then he went home, satisfied he had seen the footsteps of the greatest man in the country.

When he was an old man, a little girl in Pennsylvania wrote to him inquiring about his child-

hood on the farm. These passages are from his reply: —

"I think at the age of which thy note inquires I found about equal satisfaction in an old rural home, with the shifting panorama of the seasons, in reading the few books within my reach, and dreaming of something wonderful and grand somewhere in the future. Neither change nor loss had then made me realize the uncertainty of all earthly things. I felt secure of my mother's love, and dreamed of losing nothing and gaining much. . . . I had at that time a great thirst for knowledge and little means to gratify it. The beauty of outward nature early impressed me, and the moral and spiritual beauty of the holy lives I read of in the Bible and other good books also affected me with a sense of my falling short and longing for a better state."

To illustrate the fact that children suffer intensely from causes which their elders regard as trivial, and which they themselves are inclined to laugh at in later life, Mr. Whittier once told this story of his boyhood to the writer when passing with him the scene of the incident. It was at an ancient farmyard on a side-hill midway between East Haverhill and the village of Merrimac. In ascending this hill, his father was in the habit of relieving his horse by walking, and Greenleaf was expected to walk also. It was a terrible trial to him, and the sight of the place recalled vividly the terrors of his youth, though seventy years had passed. A gander would begin his warlike threats as soon as he saw the boy, and in later life Mr.

Whittier could have marched up a hill towards a hostile battery without such a sinking of the heart as he felt whenever he approached this harmless but noisy fowl. If he had dared to tell his father of his agony of dread, he could have remained safely in the carriage. But the fear of being laughed at prevailed over every other consideration. He thought this was the experience of many children, and that parents should treat their apparently petty troubles with more seriousness than is their custom.

In "Snow-Bound" Mr. Whittier has sketched each member of the family in which his early life was moulded. John Whittier, his father, was a tall, strongly-built man, who had been famous in his youth for the strength and quickness he displayed in athletic games and exercises. He was a man of few words, but prompt and decisive in his utterances. He was several times elected a selectman of Haverhill, and was often called upon to act as arbitrator in settling neighborhood differences. In speaking of his father's connection with town affairs, Mr. Whittier once quoted this saying of his, illustrating his opinion in regard to public charities: "There are the Lord's poor, and the Devil's poor; there ought to be a distinction made between them by the overseers of the poor." Before his marriage he made several trips to Canada through the wilds of New Hampshire, carrying on a barter trade in various commodities. To these excursions the poet refers in "Snow-Bound."

In repairing an old desk that is an heirloom in the family, a few years ago, this memorandum was

found written by John Whittier upon the back of one of the drawers: "Last time Canada, I believe, 1799." It is probably a vow he then registered not to make another of those wilderness journeys.[1] The poet's comment upon his taciturnity,

"No breath our father wasted,"

is illustrated in this brief inscription meant for no eye but his own. He was a devout member of the Society of Friends, and carefully observant of Quaker traditions. He had little or no sympathy with the literary tastes and aspirations of the young poet, who, however, found in his mother, sisters, and brother all the appreciation and encouragement his nature demanded.

The poet's mother, Abigail Whittier, was esteemed by all who knew her as one of the loveliest and saintliest of women. She was a person of much native refinement of feeling and manners, with a dignity of bearing and benignity of expression that impressed and charmed all who knew her. Her face was full and very fair, her eye dark and expressive. For fifty years she was the guide,

[1] Mr. Whittier had from his father this anecdote of his visit to the Canadian frontier: "He joined a party of horsemen and they rode through the wilds up to the Lake Memphremagog. There they met a tribe of friendly Indians. The country was wild. No settlement had been made there by the whites. On the day of my father's arrival there these Indians had gone on a spree, and every man in camp was tipsy, with but one exception, and he was kept busy looking after his companions to prevent them from rolling into the lake, and getting into mischief. My father asked the sober Indian if he never got drunk. He replied, 'Oh, yes; me get drunk some time; not now; me keep watch this time; next time me get drunk.'"

counselor, and friend of her illustrious son, who repaid her devotion with a love as deep and tender as her own. Her memory, as well as that of her sister, Mercy Hussey, is cherished with affection and respect not only in the family, and in the religious sect to which they belonged, but among all with whom they came in contact.

Of the poet's two sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, the older possessed many of the characteristics of her father, while the younger had the milder, sweeter nature of her mother. Mary, born September 3, 1806, married Jacob Caldwell of Haverhill, had two children, Louis Henry and Mary Elizabeth, and died January 7, 1860.

Perhaps the tenderest touch in "Snow-Bound" may be found in the lines referring to his sister, Elizabeth Hussey, who spent her whole life with the poet, sharing the enthusiasm and the dangers of his labors in behalf of unpopular reforms, and the cares and pleasures of his home life. Eight years younger than himself, she was from childhood his special pet and favorite, and as she grew older, she responded to his love with all the wealth of her warm affections and keen appreciation of his gifts. She became his most intimate and confidential literary friend, and with the same poetic temperament and tastes she possessed some qualifications in which he was deficient. His shyness and reticence found its complement in her easy social intercourse, her affability, and facility of expression; and with her quick sympathies and sparkling wit their frequent and various guests found most charming entertainment. Her conversation

abounded in happy phrases, not readily forgotten. Of a friend who had just returned from her wedding trip to western New York, she said: "She was very happy, — the glory of Niagara shone in her face." Like Dorothy Wordsworth, her life was one of unselfish devotion to her brother, and as a critic her assistance was highly prized by him, who, after she had passed away, thus touchingly recalls

> "the dear
> Memory of one who might have tuned my song
> To sweeter music by her delicate ear."

She, too, was a writer of no small merit, as indicated by her correspondence and published poems, which are included in all the complete editions of Whittier's poems. It was her brother's opinion that "had her health, sense of duty, and almost morbid dread of spiritual and intellectual egotism permitted, she might have taken a high place among lyrical singers." She was born December 7, 1815, and died September 3, 1864. "Snow-Bound" was written by her brother the year after her death, and while the grief for her loss, never outgrown, was still fresh.

Thomas Wentworth Higginson, during his pastorate in Newburyport, frequently visited Mr. Whittier, and he has in a recent sketch referred to three members of the family whom he regarded as "most typical Quaker women." The mother, placid, equable, elevating almost into religious rites the whiteness of her bread and the purity of her table linen, — a nature simple, noble, direct; and the gentle "Aunt Mercy" of "Snow-Bound,"

"'"The sweetest woman ever Fate
Perverse denied a household mate."

And above all "there was the gifted sister Lizzie, the pet and pride of the household, one of the rarest of women, her brother's complement, possessing all the readiness of speech and facility of intercourse which he wanted; taking easily in his presence the lead in conversation, which the poet so gladly abandoned to her, while he sat rubbing his hands, and laughing at her daring sallies. She was as unlike him in person as in mind; for his dignified erectness, she had endless motion and vivacity; for his regular and handsome features, she had a long Jewish nose, so full of expression that it seemed to enhance, instead of injuring, the effect of the large and liquid eyes that glowed with merriment and sympathy behind it. . . . Her quick thoughts came like javelins; a saucy triumph gleamed in her great eyes; the head moved a little from side to side with the quiver of a weapon, and lo! you were transfixed. Her poems, tragic, sombre, imaginative, give no impression of this side of her nature. . . . She was a woman never to be forgotten; and no one can truly estimate the long celibate life of the poet without bearing in mind that he had for many years at his own fireside the concentrated wit and sympathy of all womankind in this one sister."

Whittier's only brother, Matthew Franklin, was born July 4, 1812, and died January 7, 1883. In middle life, during his residence in Portland, Matthew Whittier took a deep interest in the anti-slavery cause, and wrote a series of humorous

letters over the signature of "Ethan Spike of Hornby," satirizing in a most caustic manner the foibles of the pro-slavery politicians of the day. The last thirteen years of his life were spent in Boston, where he had a place in the custom-house. He left three children: Charles Franklin, Elizabeth Hussey, and Alice Greenwood.

The family group, in Whittier's youth, was completed by the presence of his bachelor uncle, Moses Whittier, and of his maiden aunt, Mercy Evans Hussey, both of whom their nephew has sketched with loving touch. Moses, the youngest brother of the poet's father, spent his whole life at the homestead, in which he owned an equal share with John. He delighted in hunting, fishing, and story-telling. He had never read much or traveled far, but he was wise in the traditions of the family and neighborhood, an oracle to be consulted about the weather, and a charming companion for his nephews in their rambles. In Greenleaf, especially, "Uncle Moses" had a sympathetic listener. As they worked together in the fields, or sat by the evening fireside, he enjoyed the marvelous stories of the denizens of the forest and stream, traditions of witchcraft, and tales of strange happenings in his own times. We can imagine the moods in which these stories were received, and how they would be warmed and colored in the kindling fancy of the youth. As he stood at his uncle's knee at such times, he fell into reveries from which the good man would arouse him by the sharp exclamation, "Come,

boy, get out of that *stound!*" Uncle Moses was born in 1762, and died January 23, 1824. He was fatally injured by the falling of a tree, which he had cut down, and which, taking an unexpected direction, pinned him to the ground. His faithful dog gave warning at the house, and he was soon found and extricated; but he did not long survive the accident.

"Aunt Mercy," a younger sister of the poet's mother, lived in the family from his earliest memory to the time of her death, in 1846. With less of dignity and "presence" than her sister, she had a singular sweetness of disposition, and loving, helpful ways. Her gentle ministrations at the bedside of the sick and suffering gave a peculiar significance to the name her parents bestowed on this Quaker "sister of mercy."

Even the story of Aunt Mercy's quiet life was not without a tinge of romance. In her youth, according to the tradition of the family, she was betrothed to a worthy young man. Late one evening, as she sat musing by the fire in the old kitchen, after the rest of the family had retired, she felt impelled to go to the window, and, looking out, she recognized her lover on horseback approaching the house. As she had reason to suppose that he was then in New York, she was surprised at his unexpected return, and his call at so late an hour. Passing the porch window as she hastened to open the door, she saw her lover ride by it, and turn as if to dismount at the step. The next instant the door was open, but no trace of man or horse was to be seen. Bewildered and

terrified, she called her sister, who listened to her story, and tried to soothe her and efface the painful impression. "Thee had better go to bed, Mercy; thee has been asleep and dreaming by the fire," she said. But Mercy was quite sure she had not been asleep, and what she had seen was as real as any waking experience of her life. In recalling the circumstances of her vision, one by one, she at length took notice that she had heard no sound of hoofs! It may be imagined what was the effect of all this upon the sensitive girl, and she was not unprepared, after a weary waiting of many days, to learn through a letter from New York, written by a strange hand, that her lover had died on the very day, and at the hour, of her vision. In her grief she did not shut herself away from the world, but lived a life of cheerful charity. She did not forget her first love, and gave no encouragement to other suitors.

Among the characters mentioned in "Snow-Bound" is the "master of the district school," who

"Held at the fire his favored place."

This sketch of the schoolmaster is a composite of memories of two teachers of the district school, Joshua Coffin and George Haskell, both Dartmouth students. Coffin was the lifelong friend to whom he addressed the poem, "To My Old Schoolmaster." The writer, who is a nephew of Coffin, remembering that his uncle was a native of Newburyport, once asked Whittier to whom he referred in the line:

"Born the wild Northern hills among,"

and he could not at first recall the name, but some

years afterward said it was Haskell, that he came from Maine, and he never knew what became of him. It has since been ascertained that George Haskell became a physician, went West, and was one of the founders of Shurtleff College, Illinois. He was living near Vineland, N. J., in 1866, when the poem that means so much to his memory was published. He had purchased a tract of four thousand acres of land in that vicinity, and was planning for a model community in 1876, when he died. It is a curious fact that he never was aware that his portrait was in "Snow-Bound," though familiar with the poem. Indeed he does not seem to have remembered the episode of his student life which brought him in touch with young Whittier. The list of indoor games which were played by New England children in Whittier's youth, enumerated in his account of the schoolmaster, was not in the original draft of the poem, but was an afterthought, added in the proof. The game of "cross pins" is not familiar to children of the present day. Pins were placed on top of a stiff hat and the hat tapped with a stick; the object of each player was to jostle his pins across those of his opponent, each pin thus crossed being forfeited. It was Coffin who was remembered as a leader in these games.

The unwelcome guest, mentioned in "Snow-Bound," was Harriet Livermore, an eccentric personage, whose wanderings occasionally brought her to East Haverhill, and her coming was dreaded by Whittier in his boyhood. In later years he did much to befriend her. She obtained opportunities to lecture in Philadelphia and in Washington

through his influence. She was born in Concord, N. H., in 1788, and was a daughter of Hon. Edward St. Loe Livermore, who sat upon the bench of the Supreme Court of the State, as also did his father and brother before him. He afterward resided in Newburyport, and represented the North Essex district in Congress from 1807 to 1812. At the period referred to in "Snow-Bound," Harriet Livermore had embraced the doctrine of the Second Advent, and went about proclaiming the Lord's speedy coming. She had but slight control over a violent temper, and quarreled with nearly every one with whom she associated. She spent several years in travel over Europe and the Holy Land, and returned to this country soon after "Snow-Bound" was written. She died the next year, 1867.[1]

The Whittier family had from the first held a leading social position in the East Parish. Their religious views were respected, although none of their immediate neighbors were of the same faith, and the pastor of the Congregational church in the same vicinity seldom passed them by, when making his pastoral calls. On First days, when the weather was suitable, the parents, or uncle

[1] Whittier never knew that she had seen his unflattering portrait of herself. It came about in this way: A friend in Burlington, N. J., a druggist, received from Whittier an early copy of *Snow-Bound*, and before he had read it he handed it to an aged lady who had called upon him with a prescription it would take some time to compound. He was surprised when she returned the book at the agitation of her manner, as she exclaimed that it contained lies about her. Long afterward he learned that his strange visitor was Harriet Livermore!

and aunt, always drove to their meeting at Amesbury, taking with them, by turns, as many of the children as their one-horse carriage would accommodate.[1] A portion of the afternoon was generally spent by the assembled family in reading the Holy Scriptures, and such other religious books as their scanty library afforded.

These readings seem to have been characterized by much freedom of comment, in which the young poet sometimes expressed his doubts regarding the morality of certain acts recorded in the Old Testament, on one occasion questioning whether King David, man of war as he was, could have been a member of the Society of Friends. In consequence of such criticisms, his parents deemed it best at one time to confine his study of the Bible mostly to the New Testament. To this faithful teaching in the home may be attributed in large measure Whittier's familiarity with the Scriptures and frequent quotations in his writings. As Stedman has truly said, "The Bible is rarely absent from his verse, and its spirit never."

While the home life was thus pure and elevating in its influence, the social privileges of the family were among the best in their vicinity. The father, holding offices of trust in the town, was associated with many of its notable citizens, and the proverbial hospitality and refinement of the mother and aunt drew around them a circle of more than usual cultivation. The visits of the itiner-

[1] Mr. Whittier's father had a chaise, the only one owned in the neighborhood. We find a receipt for an internal revenue tax of one dollar on this chaise for the year 1817.

ant ministers of the Friends were an element not to be overlooked in the religious development of the younger members of the family. These visits to the meetings and families of their fellow-members were more frequent seventy-five years ago than in later times, and often proved a source of much comfort and encouragement. One of these ministers from England, William Forster, the father of the Right Honorable William Edward Forster, who was entertained at the Whittier mansion, is referred to in the poem "William Forster."

Before the days of steam and electricity, the Eastern members of the Society, attending their Yearly Meeting at Newport, R. I., generally performed the journey in their own carriages, depending largely upon their friends for entertainment by the way, in which pleasant service the Whittiers had their full share, sometimes receiving under their roof from ten to fifteen guests.

These memories of the village nearest to his birthplace we find in a letter written by Mr. Whittier in 1875 to a friend who was also a native of East Haverhill: —

"Your note carries me back to my boyhood, to the time when I used to know you at 'Rocks Village.' How well I remember the place and the people! Colonel Johnson and his tavern; Esquire Frost and his store; Esquire Ladd and his blacksmith shop; Ephraim B. Orne and his combs; Poyen and his cigars! How plainly rises before me the figure of Dr. Weld in his drab coat and breeches, — a true gentleman of the old school, — a skillful physician, and benefactor of the peo-

ple! Colonel Poor, who used to search our woods for ship timber; widow Pettee, who used to make my homespun coats and trousers; old 'aunt Morse,' who was regarded by the average juvenile mind as a witch, — all these and many more are associated with my recollections of Rocks Village."

This fragment of an autobiography was found among Mr. Whittier's papers, and was evidently written in the days of "Union-saving" compromises: —

"In the order of Providence I was born within the pale of a society which had relieved itself of the wrong and inconsistency of slave-holding by voluntary emancipation on the part of its members. My father was an old-fashioned Democrat, and really believed in the Preamble of the Bill of Rights, which reaffirmed the Declaration of Independence. My mother used to tell us the sad story of the kidnapping and transportation of the negro children. At district school I learned the Decalogue without any hint on the part of my instructors that its every command might be piously violated for the sake of fulfilling prophecy, and insuring the curse of Canaan. The standard reading-book was the 'American Preceptor,' liberally sprinkled with anti-slavery prose and poetry. One of the pieces rings in my memory even now. It was the story of an insurgent slave, — a black John Bruce: —

> 'First of his race, he led his band
> Guardless of dangers hovering round,
> Till by his bold, avenging hand,
> Full many a despot stained the ground.'

His arrest, at last, and cruel death by torture were described, closing with an appeal to the reader's admiration and sympathy: —

> 'Does not the soul to Heaven allied
> Feel the full heart as greatly swell
> As when the Roman Cato died,
> Or when the Grecian victim fell?'

"In those days there was no Union-saving committee to do the work of expurgation, and prevent the young idea from shooting in the direction of Liberty. It was never my privilege to hear a pro-slavery sermon, and I grew up in blissful ignorance of the Gospel according to Parson Adams."

CHAPTER II.

SCHOOLDAYS AND EARLY VERSES.

1820–1828.

Until he was nineteen years of age, the only schools young Whittier had attended were the meagre ones supplied during a small part of the year by the district. He was accustomed to say that only two of the teachers who were employed in that district during his schooldays were fit for the not very exacting position they occupied. Both of these were Dartmouth students: one of them George Haskell, to whom reference has already been made, and the other Joshua Coffin, who afterward became known as an antiquary and as the historian of Newbury. Coffin was associated with Garrison and Whittier in the beginning of their crusade against slavery, and enjoyed their friendship through life.

Whittier's first appearance in school was before he was of "school age," during a term when Joshua Coffin was teaching in the district. He accompanied his older sister, Mary, and was too young to be placed in any class except that in which the alphabet was taught. The schoolhouse was undergoing repairs at that time, and the school was held in the ell of a dwelling-house now standing. The other part of the house was occupied by a tipsy and quarrelsome couple, reference to which fact

will be found in the poem "To My Old Schoolmaster." Some years afterward, in 1821, Coffin was again a teacher in that district, and he spent many of his evenings at the Whittier homestead, a most welcome guest.

There were few books in the house, and most of them not of a kind to satisfy the literary appetite of a boy in his teens, who found poor picking among the dry journals and religious disquisitions of the pioneers of Quakerism.[1] There were not more than thirty volumes in all. These and the Bible he had read and re-read until he knew them by heart. It may be readily imagined what a new life was opened to him when a lively student, fresh from college, sat at the fireside and spoke familiarly of other literatures. His teacher brought with him books of travel and adventure, and read them to his mother and aunt, as they sat knitting by the fire. He little thought that the boy of fourteen was the most eager of his listeners. Coffin told wise and merry stories, and read from books such as otherwise would scarcely have entered this strictly Quaker household. One evening the teacher brought a volume of Burns, and read many pages from it, explaining the Scottish dialect as he proceeded. Greenleaf listened spellbound in his corner. A fire was that evening kindled upon an altar that grew not cold for seventy years. Coffin had only thought of his older listeners as he read and explained. But as

[1] Speaking of the journals of Friends which made so large a part of his father's library, he said in later life that in his youth he read them so much that he had steeped his mind with their thoughts. He loved their authors because they were so saintly, and yet so humbly unconscious of it.

he shut the book he noticed that his tall, shy pupil was in what Uncle Moses had quaintly called his "stound." He recalled the lad to his ordinary senses by offering to leave the book with him, if he was interested in it. The offer was, of course, gladly accepted. What this little volume thus loaned to him was to young Whittier has since been told in one of the finest tributes to Burns that have yet been written. He soon began to try his own wings, but at great disadvantage, hampered as he was by his surroundings. He early developed a love for books of biography and travel, and borrowed all that were to be found in the neighborhood.

A story has been published to the effect that young Whittier was punished at school for refusal to learn the Westminster catechism. It had only slight foundation in fact. The teacher required the scholars to learn the catechism on Saturdays from the New England Primer. Greenleaf had no Primer, and was told by the teacher to get one. His father told him he need not study the catechism, as it contained errors. He reported this to the teacher, and the study of the Primer was not enforced in his case.

The room occupied by the boys during part of their childhood was the chamber in the northwestern corner of the second story. The clapboards were gone from some portion of the western gable at that time, and the snow of winter sometimes sifted through the cracks upon their bed. In this room occurred the incident that has been made the theme of a poem by J. T. Trowbridge. The two little Quaker boys had found they could lift

each other, and one evening experimented upon the proposition made by the elder, that by lifting each other in turn they could rise to the ceiling, and there was no knowing how much further, if they were out of doors! To make it easy in case of failure the prudent lads first tried the experiment of standing upon the bed in this little room. Trowbridge says: —

> "'T was a shrewd notion none the less,
> And still, in spite of ill success,
> It somehow has succeeded.
> Kind Nature smiled on that wise child,
> Nor could her love deny him
> The large fulfillment of his plan;
> Since he who lifts his brother man
> In turn is lifted by him."

Whittier's first visit to Boston was made while he was in his teens, and he was accustomed to tell with much amusement his adventures on that occasion. He was the guest of his relative, Mrs. Nathaniel Greene, wife of the postmaster of Boston, who was also editor of the "Statesman," a paper in which many of Whittier's early poems were afterwards printed. The Greenes sometimes visited the Whittiers at Haverhill. On this occasion, he wore for the first time in his life "boughten buttons" upon his homespun Quaker coat, and it was a surprise to him that the bravery of his apparel did not seem to impress those who passed him in the street. He wore a broadbrim Quaker hat made for him by his Aunt Mercy out of pasteboard, covered with drab velvet. One event which signalized this visit was his purchase of a copy of Shakespeare. He had been strictly

cautioned by his mother to avoid the theatre, and when he learned that a brilliant lady he met at the table of Mrs. Greene, who had been very kind in her attentions to the quaint, shy boy, and who had quite won his heart by her simplicity and grace, was an actress, it was a great shock to him; but he had the courage to refuse her invitation to the play-house, and cut short his visit to the city to avoid the terrible temptation to which he was subjected. He had gone quite too far in buying Shakespeare's plays, and fled homeward lest he should bring disgrace upon his Quakerism. His family were surprised to see him back so soon, but he did not dare to tell them the startling episode of his encounter with a live actress.

A copy of one of the Waverley novels, then fresh from the hand of its unknown author, was somewhere obtained by young Whittier, but the fact was kept from the knowledge of his parents, and the book was read with surreptitious enthusiasm, his sister enjoying with him the literary banquet. He used to tell how they sat reading until late one night, when just as they reached a critical part of the story, their candle burned to its socket, and, sadly disappointed, they were compelled to retire in the dark.

Of the no doubt crude literary work undertaken by Whittier during the next two years after he made the acquaintance of Burns, from 1821 to 1823, scarcely any vestige remains. His schoolmates say he was in the habit of covering his slate with rhymes, which were passed about from desk to desk to the great amusement of the

school.[1] When a small boy, it was noticed by the family that after his "nightly chores" were done, and they were gathered around their evening fire, instead of doing sums on his slate, like many other boys, he was covering it with verses, one of which was rescued from oblivion by the memory of his older sister, and ran thus: —

> "And must I always swing the flail,
> And help to fill the milking pail?
> I wish to go away to school;
> I do not wish to be a fool."

Another of his earliest effusions was an attempt to make a rhymed catalogue of the books in his father's library. Here are a few of the verses: —

> "The Bible towering o'er the rest,
> Of all other books the best.
>
> "William Penn's laborious writing
> And a book 'gainst Christians fighting.
>
> "A book concerning John's Baptism,
> Elias Smith's Universalism.
>
> "How Captain Riley and his crew
> Were on Sahara's desert threw.
>
> "How Rollins, to obtain the cash,
> Wrote a dull history of trash.
>
> "The Lives of Franklin and of Penn,
> Of Fox and Scott, all worthy men.
>
> "The Life of Burroughs too I 've read,
> As big a rogue as e'er was made.
>
> "And Tufts, too, though I will be civil,
> Worse than an incarnate devil."

[1] It is a tradition that his first verses were written upon the beam of his mother's loom.

Greenleaf began a diary when he was fourteen years old, his mother making a book for him by folding and stitching some foolscap paper. He could not think of anything to write in the diary, his life on the farm was so uneventful. His mother suggested that he write of some striking event in the past that had come under his observation. The only great event he could think of was the wind-storm of 1815, six years before; [1] so he wrote an account of that, and never afterward made an entry in this, or in any other diary.

The desk upon which young Whittier wrote his first rhymes was even at that time an ancient piece of furniture. It had stood by the eastern window of the kitchen in the old homestead at Haverhill ever since the days of his great-grandfather, the son of the pioneer, Thomas Whittier, more than a century before the birth of the poet. When the family removed to Amesbury, it was taken with them, but was soon after replaced by a new one, and the old desk went "out of commission." In the summer of 1891, Mr. Whittier's niece had this ancient desk repaired, and as her uncle was to spend the next fall and winter in Newburyport, it was sent to the house of his cousins, the Cartlands. Mr. Whittier was greatly pleased, upon his arrival, to find in his room the heirloom which was hallowed by so many associations connected not only with his ancestry, but

[1] This cyclone's path was a few miles away from the East Parish, but Greenleaf saw the whirling cloud and heard its roar. It took off the roof of the house of his Aunt Ruth Jones, in Amesbury, and this fact probably deepened the lines of his memory of it.

with his own early life. Nearly all the literary work of his last year was done upon this desk. To his niece he wrote: —

"I came here day before yesterday, and found it very homelike. I am writing at the old desk, which Gertrude has placed in my room, but it seems difficult to imagine myself the boy who used to sit by it and make rhymes. It is wonderfully rejuvenated and is a handsome piece of furniture. It was the desk of my great-grandfather [the first Joseph Whittier], and seemed to me a wretched old wreck when thee took it to Portland. I did not suppose it could be made either useful or ornamental. I wrote my first pamphlet on slavery, 'Justice and Expediency,' upon it, as well as a great many rhymes which might as well have never been written. I am glad that it has got a new lease of life."[1]

One of Whittier's earliest efforts at verse was a parody on "The Old Oaken Bucket," and was entitled "The Willows." It was never sent to the press by him, and exists only in manuscript, being now in the possession of Mr. Charles Aldrich, of the Iowa State Library. This is the first stanza:

[1] The old desk has been given by Mrs. Pickard, together with nearly all the family heirlooms which originally belonged at East Haverhill, and which came into her possession, to the trustees having the ancient homestead in charge, and it will have a permanent place in the same corner of the old kitchen in which it stood for more than a century. In renovating it, the memoranda of farm events, written upon the backs and bottoms of the drawers by his father and grandfather, have been preserved. Among the inscriptions upon the outside of the desk, at the back, are the letters "J. W." and the date "1786," written large in black paint, by his grandfather, the second Joseph Whittier.

"Oh, dear to my heart are the scenes which delighted
My fancy in moments I ne'er can recall,
When each happy hour new pleasures invited,
And hope pictured visions more holy than all.
Then I gazed with light heart, transported and glowing,
On the forest-crowned hill and the rivulet's tide,
O'ershadowed with tall grass and rapidly flowing
Around the lone willow that stood by its side, —
The storm-battered willow, the ivy-bound willow, the water-washed willow that grew by its side."

It is written in small, neat, old-fashioned chirography, on a foolscap sheet, on the back of which is another poem never collected, entitled "The Emerald Isle." There is a clump of willows upon Country Brook, near the Whittier homestead, and close by the Country Bridge, which the young poet probably had in mind when he wrote the first-named poem.

While not shirking any of the tasks that fell to him as the son of a farmer who expected him to spend his life, as had several generations of his ancestors, in tilling the soil, it became evident at an early age that other thoughts and aspirations were agitating the mind of the lad, although he was himself hardly aware of any disloyalty to the farm. His father discouraged what he thought a foolish waste of time over his day-dreams, but his mother "hid these things in her heart," a little hope mingling with her apprehension of an unsettled life for her son. His sister Mary actively encouraged him. He filled many foolscap pages with neatly written verses on "Lafayette," "Contentment," "William Penn," "Benevolence," the "Death of Alexander of Russia," and on other themes, with no expectation of ever seeing them

in print. Several of these pages are now extant, but the verses written upon them he never wished to have reproduced in any collection of his poems. They are of interest chiefly as showing the steps in which he groped, amid unpromising surroundings, toward literary culture. These first poems bear date from 1823 to 1826 inclusive. They were written before he had any advantage of the academy or access to libraries.

His sister Mary, feeling confident that some of his poems were as good as those she saw in the poet's corner of the "Free Press," determined to offer one of them to that paper without giving the editor any hint of the source from whence it came. William Lloyd Garrison had just started this weekly paper, in Newburyport, and its humanitarian tone so pleased the Quaker John Whittier that he subscribed for it. Garrison was only two years older than Whittier, but he began editorial work at an early age, and was in literary experience very much the senior of the young poet. One day he found under the door of his office a poem entitled "The Exile's Departure," and signed "W." The piece was written during the previous year, and Mary had selected it as in her opinion the one most likely to be accepted. She sent it without her brother's knowledge. It was therefore a great surprise to the young poet when he opened the paper, and turned to the column in which poetry was usually printed, to find his own verses conspicuously displayed. The paper came to him when he was with his father mending a stone wall by the roadside, picking up and placing the stones

in position. As they were thus engaged, the postman passed them on horseback, and tossed the paper to the young man. His heart stood still a moment when he saw his own verses. Such delight as his comes only once in the lifetime of any aspirant to literary fame. His father at last called to him to put up the paper, and keep at work. But he could not resist the temptation to take the paper again and again from his pocket to stare at his lines in print. He has said he was sure that he did not read a word of the poem all the time he looked at it.

The date of the "Free Press" that contained this poem was June 8, 1826. The date of composition was June 1, 1825. It did not appear in an early collection of his works, but may be found in the appendix of the Riverside edition of 1888. The success of this venture induced the sending of another poem, entitled "The Deity," an amplification of the sublime passage of Scripture to be found in the 11th and 12th verses of the 19th chapter of First Kings. This also was written in 1825, and was published in the "Free Press" of June 22, 1826. Mr. Garrison introduced it with the following eulogistic paragraph: —

"The author of the following graphic sketch, which would do credit to riper years, is a youth of only sixteen, who we think bids fair to prove another Bernard Barton, of whose persuasion he is. His poetry bears the stamp of true poetic genius, which, if carefully cultivated, will rank him among the bards of his country."

By inquiring of the postman, Mr. Garrison had

learned the locality from which the Haverhill poems emanated, and drove out to call upon his new and promising contributor, a distance of fourteen miles. The editor was a neatly dressed, handsome, and affable young gentleman, and his coming to the farmhouse accompanied by a lady friend caused quite a sensation. It happened that on this eventful morning the young poet had discovered that a hen had stolen her nest under the barn, and he was crawling on his hands and knees, digging his dusty way towards her, when his sister Mary came out to summon him to receive the city visitors. It was only by her urgent persuasion that he was induced to give up burrowing for the eggs. By making a wide detour, he entered the house without being seen, and in haste effected a change of raiment. In telling the story many years afterward, he said he put on trousers that came scarcely to his ankles, and must have been a laughable spectacle; he would have much preferred to come in just as when he emerged from under the barn. Garrison, with the social tact that always distinguished him, put the shy youth at ease at once. This was the beginning of the life-long acquaintance and friendship of these two remarkable men. It antedates by some years the anti-slavery agitation in which they were afterward intimately associated. Garrison heartily commended the poems he had published, and assured Whittier of his belief in his capacity for better things. He earnestly advised him to secure an education.

For a time the thought of sending Greenleaf to

an academy was given up; Garrison had removed to Boston, and the young poet offered his verses to the Haverhill "Gazette," which had recently come into the possession of Mr. Abijah W. Thayer, who had previously edited a paper in Portland. Mr. Thayer had such a high opinion of his young contributor that in January, 1827, he went to his father, as Mr. Garrison had done a few months earlier, to urge him to give his son a classical education. A new academy was soon to be opened in Haverhill, and he could attend it and spend a part of each week at his home. The old gentleman took into consideration the fact that two years before Greenleaf had seriously injured himself by attempting farm work that was too heavy for him, and was at length inclined to yield, though protesting it was contrary to Friends' custom to acquire the polish of literary culture. The mother asked Mr. Thayer if he would take Greenleaf into his family, and this was readily promised. The only problem that now proved troublesome was how to obtain the money needed to defray expenses. When John Whittier bought the interest of the other heirs in his father's estate, he assumed a debt that was not yet fully paid. There was a mortgage of $600 upon the farm, and it was difficult to get ready money for their farm products, beyond what was required to pay taxes and the interest on the debt. The Whittier orchard at that time had no grafted apples; there were plenty of cranberries in the meadow, and other berries in the upland; enough of ship-timber and firewood in the forests, but there was then no market for any of these things.

The young man had permission to attend the academy, but he must pay his own way. This task he set about with a glad heart. An opportunity soon appeared. A man who worked in the summer upon his father's farm made a cheap kind of slippers in the winter, and he offered to instruct young Whittier in the art. The offer was gladly accepted, and, as it was the simplest kind of sandal that was to be made, the mystery of the trade was soon acquired. The retail price of the slippers was only twenty-five cents a pair, and he received but eight cents a pair for his work; and yet during the winter of 1826–27 enough was earned to pay the expense of a term of six months at the academy. He calculated so closely every item of expense that he knew before the beginning of the term that he would have twenty-five cents to spare at its close, and he actually had this sum of money in his pocket when his half year of study was over. It was the rule of his whole life never to buy anything until he had the money in hand to pay for it, and although his income was small and uncertain until past middle life, he was never in debt.

James F. Otis, a nephew of Harrison Gray Otis, while reading law in the office of Hon. Nathan Crosby, in 1827, found in a newspaper a piece of poetry which he was told was written by a shoemaker in Haverhill, and he wished to go and find him. Upon his return, he told Mr. Crosby that he found a young man by the name of Whittier, at work in his shoe-shop, and making himself known to him, they spent the day together in wandering over the hills, and on the shores of the

Merrimac, in conversation on literary matters. Otis, who was himself a poet, afterward became an intimate friend of Whittier, and accompanied him to Philadelphia, as a delegate to the anti-slavery convention of 1833. Later, Otis went South, and became an apologist for slavery.

On the first day of May, 1827, Whittier began his "higher education" at the Haverhill Academy, and the event was signalized in a way that gave him a reputation at once. It was the first term of a new academy, for which a fine brick building had just been completed. The institution was formally opened on the 30th of April, and the dedicatory oration was delivered by the Hon. Leverett Saltonstall, of Salem. The programme announced that an ode was to be sung, "composed for the occasion by John G. Whittier, of this town." The principal of the new school was Oliver Carlton. The fact that a young citizen of the town, who was to be a student in the school, had written the ode for an important public ceremony gave him a certain social and literary distinction at the start. He studied the ordinary English branches, and also took lessons in French. He took especial delight in the access he obtained to the best private libraries in the village.[1]

One can imagine the surprise and pleasure of such a mind as his when great fields of literature

[1] At the dedication of the Haverhill Library, in 1875, Mr. Whittier wrote to Mayor Currier: "When my old friend James Gale set up his circulating library, it was the opening of a new world of enjoyment to me. I can still remember the feeling of mingled awe and pleasure with which I gazed for the first time on his crowded bookshelves."

hitherto closed to him were thrown open. He was in the prime of his young manhood when he took his first plunge into the glorious Shakespearian flood. While reveling in the poetry of the great masters, in the adventures of travelers, in the history of nations, and in the wit and satire of Sterne and Swift, he neither neglected his studies, nor omitted frequently to try his own wings in song. These first six months of academy life were full of intense activity. He had written in 1825 and 1826 about a dozen poems, which are extant, although some of them were never printed. In 1827, there were published, in the Haverhill "Gazette" alone, forty-seven of his poems, and forty-nine in 1828. As he found these copied by other papers, he occasionally sent his work to the Boston "Statesman," edited by Nathaniel Greene, a kinsman of his, and to the "National Philanthropist," edited by Garrison after he gave up the "Free Press." He used a variety of signatures, a favorite one being "Adrian;" when he wrote in the Scottish dialect he took the name of "Donald;" and still further to conceal his identity he signed his poems "Timothy," "Jeremiah," "Micajah," and "Ichabod." All not signed with either of these names had the letter "W." for signature. The first poem that appeared with his full name was a long one, entitled "The Outlaw," printed in the "Gazette," October 28, 1828. Nearly all have dates indicating the year and the month of their composition. There were ten poems written in the two months before he entered the academy, besides the ode sung at the dedication.

On the 8th of November, 1828, the "Gazette" had a prose article by Whittier on Robert Burns. The next week he contributed an article on "Temperance." Mr. Thayer was one of the first editors in the country to publish regularly articles on this theme, and he secured the ill-will of the dealers in, and distillers of, intoxicants by his plain speaking. He was also justice of the peace, and had a hand in disciplining the "rummies." Mr. Whittier assisted him in this warfare upon the saloons, and after Mr. Thayer removed to Philadelphia, Whittier wrote to him February 16, 1836: "Esquire Parker wishes me to remember him to thee. We have been lamenting over thy departure, and wishing it were possible for thee to sit once more in judgment over the rascals that are now 'unwhipped of justice.' Parker wishes me to tell thee, that as the only way of keeping the streets clear of the 'rum-'uns,' he has lately sent them off by the baker's dozen to Ipswich."

One year later he had the satisfaction of writing from Amesbury, whither he had meantime removed, "I have one item of good news from Haverhill. The old distillery has had its fires quenched at last. C. has sold out, and the building is to be converted into stores."

While attending the academy he boarded, according to promise, in the family of Mr. Thayer, who proved to be a valuable friend and adviser, not only at that time but in later years. In a letter to Mr. Thayer's son,[1] written in 1877, he says: "I never think of thy mother without feelings of

[1] The late Prof. J. B. Thayer, of the Harvard Law School.

love and gratitude. She and thy father were my best friends in the hard struggle of my school-days." Every Friday night he walked to East Haverhill, spent the Sabbath at the old homestead, and delighted the hearts of his family with his companionship and his reports of school life. Mrs. Thayer, in her reminiscences of the poet[1] as he appeared in those days, said she remembered his handsome face and figure, and the appearance of extreme neatness he always bore; but she had more to say of the liveliness of his temper, his ready wit, his perfect courtesy, and infallible sense of truth and justice. On account of his abilities and his exemplary conduct, no less than on account of his reputation as a rising poet, his society was much sought after. Whenever he came to Haverhill, in after years, he made his home with the Thayers, until they removed to Philadelphia, where Mr. Thayer set up a new paper. When Mr. Whittier went to Philadelphia, he again became an inmate of their house.

The late Mrs. Harriet Minot Pitman, a daughter of Judge Minot, an intimate and lifelong friend and correspondent of Mr. Whittier, wrote the following sketch of his personal appearance and manners in his youth:[2] —

"He was nearly nineteen years old when I first saw him. He was a very handsome, distinguished-looking young man. His eyes were remarkably beautiful. He was tall, slight, and very erect; a bashful youth, but *never awkward*, my mother

[1] Underwood's *Life*, p. 73.
[2] Underwood's *Life*, pp. 75–77.

said, who was a better judge than I of such matters. There were pupils at the academy of all ages, from ten to twenty-five. My brother, George Minot, then about ten years old, used to say that Whittier was the best of all the big fellows, and he was in the habit of calling him 'Uncle Toby.' Whittier was always kind to children, and under a very grave and quiet exterior there was a real love of fun, and a keen sense of the ludicrous. In society he was embarrassed, and his manners were, in consequence, sometimes brusque and cold. With intimate friends he talked a great deal, and in a wonderfully interesting manner; usually earnest, often analytical, and frequently playful. He had a great deal of wit. It was a family characteristic. The study of human nature was very interesting to him, and his insight was keen. He liked to draw out his young friends, and to suggest puzzling doubts and queries. When a wrong was to be righted, or an evil to be remedied, he was readier to act than any young man I ever knew, and was very wise in his action, — shrewd, sensible, practical. The influence of his Quaker bringing-up was manifest. I think it was always his endeavor

> 'to render less
> The sum of human wretchedness.'

This, I say, was his steadfast endeavor, in spite of an inborn love of teasing. He was very modest, never conceited, never egotistic. One could never flatter him. I never tried, but I have seen people attempt it, and it was a signal failure. He did not flatter, but told very wholesome and unpala-

table truths, yet in a way to spare one's self-love by admitting a doubt whether he was in earnest or in jest. The great questions of Calvinism were subjects of which he often talked in those early days. He was exceedingly conscientious. He cared for people, — quite as much for the plainest and most uncultivated, if they were original and had something in them, as for the most polished. He was much interested in politics, and thoroughly posted. I remember, in one of his first calls at our house, being surprised at his conversation with my father upon Governor Gerry and the Gerrymandering of the State, or the attempt to do it, of which I had until then been wholly ignorant. He had a retentive memory, and a marvelous store of information on many subjects. I once saw a little commonplace book of his, — full of quaint things, and as interesting as Southey's."

In a letter written a dozen years after this date, Whittier refers to himself at this period in the following terms : —

" For myself, I owe much to the kind encouragement of female friends. A bashful, ignorant boy, I was favored by the kindness of a lady who saw, or thought she saw, beneath the clownish exterior something which gave promise of intellect and worth. The powers of my own mind, the mysteries of my own spirit, were revealed to myself, only as they were called out by one of those dangerous relations called cousins, who, with all her boarding-school glories upon her, condescended to smile upon my rustic simplicity. She was so learned in the to me more than occult mysteries

of verbs and nouns, and philosophy, and botany, and mineralogy, and French, and all that, and then she had seen something of society, and could talk (an accomplishment at that time to which I could lay no claim), that on the whole I looked upon her as a being to obtain whose good opinion no effort could be too great. I smile at this sometimes, — this feeling of my unsophisticated boyhood, — yet to a great degree it is still with me."

In January, 1828, Mr. Thayer issued the prospectus of a book to be published by subscription, from which we make this extract: —

"The Poems of Adrian. — Many of the poems now proposed to be published originally appeared in the 'Essex Gazette,' and were very favorably received by its readers. Some of them have been copied into the most respectable papers, in various sections of the Union, with strong expressions of approbation. When the circumstances under which these poems were written are known, they will be particularly interesting. The author (a native of this town) is a young man, about nineteen years of age, who has had, until very recently, no other means of education than are afforded in a common district school, and such as he improved in the *leisure hours* of an apprenticeship to a mechanical business. It is believed by his friends that these poems indicate genius of a high order, which deserves all possible culture. The design of thus offering his juvenile writings to the public is to raise money to assist him in obtaining a classical education. He is a worthy member of the

Society of Friends, and it is hoped that from them the volume will receive a liberal patronage."

The proposed volume was to be printed on superfine paper, to contain about two hundred pages, and be done up in boards, at the price of seventy-five cents. For some reason, this enterprise was not carried out by Mr. Thayer. During his second term in the academy, Mr. Whittier made considerable progress in compiling a history of the town of Haverhill, but when he was called away to Boston in the fall of 1828, he gave the materials he had collected to Mr. B. L. Mirick, who completed the work, and it was published by Mr. Thayer in 1832.

The Carrier's New Year's Address of the "Gazette," for 1828, was written by Mr. Whittier, as was also that for 1829, which he sent from Boston. The year's doings in the town are recounted in a lively way in each of these poems. There was a fire in the village in 1827, which called out several amusing stanzas, of which one is given below, and also one about the ghost that was troubling the East Parish. A note gives the information that many years previously a ghost was sent in "quest of wretches," and ordered to traverse the space between Country Bridge and the residence of Black Peter, and it was grimly added that "the ghost is still doing duty:" —

> "The old dumbetty engine poised on high
> Wet all around, but kindly spared the fire;
> And strangers, dripping as they hurried by,
> Cursed the old wreck, and bade them push it nigher;
> For, like the gun that honest Paddy bore,
> It carried all behind it — and before!
>
> . . . . . .

> "Shad Parish still continues much the same;
> The unwearied ghost still watches Country Bridge,
> Or walks with clattering teeth and eyes of flame
> From his old station up to Peter's Ridge;
> Nay, smile not, reader, but as truth receive it. —
> Shad Parish women to a man believe it!"

Mr. Whittier wrote a series of prose articles on War, which were published in the "Gazette" in 1828. His poems began to be plagiarized in the same year. In February, 1828, the Philadelphia "Saturday Evening Post" apologized for an instance of this kind, by which it was hoaxed.

This anecdote, in which reference is made to the "Country Bridge ghost," is told by Rebecca I. Davis, author of "Reminiscences of Merrimac Valley," as part of a conversation she had with Whittier in 1884. She had told him of a recent visit to his birthplace, and spoke of "Peter's Ridge" (mentioned in "The Countess") and "Country Bridge," and his eye caught some of its youthful fire, she says, as he laughingly related an incident of his boyhood days in connection with the haunted bridge, where it is said the "unwearied ghost still watches."

"I remember," he said, "when a small boy, of being extremely startled by a woman coming to our house in the evening in great fright, saying she had seen a headless ghost as she came by Country Bridge, which fact caused several of us lads to go one moonlight night, myself promising to run upon the bridge, and call for the headless ghost. Never shall I forget how my courage failed when in sight, but true to my promise, I ran, and shouted for the ghost to come forth, and immediately ran from the scene with all my might."

A reminiscence of the same period, pertaining to the witchcraft fancies of the time, occurs in a letter by Mr. Whittier, in 1883, to his old schoolmate, Mr. C. C. Chase: —

"It was old Mrs. C——, wife of Moses C——, of Rocks Village, a brother of Uncle Aaron's father, who lived at Corliss Hill, whose relatives believed her a witch, and one of her nieces knocked her down in the shape of a persistent bug that troubled her, and at the same time the old woman fell and hurt her head! Old Aunt Morse, on one occasion, went before Squire Ladd, the old blacksmith and justice of the peace at the Rocks, and took her oath that she was not a witch! I visited the site of our old schoolhouse a year ago. I thought of Ossian's lament, 'I passed by the walls of Balclutha and found them desolate; the fox looked out of the window.' Not a fox, but a striped squirrel sat on the wall, and watched me as I pondered on old days."

Whittier's first and only experience as a schoolmaster was in the winter of 1827–28. He took a school in the Birch Meadow district, in West Amesbury, now Merrimac, and earned enough to pay for another term at the academy. He went to be examined as to his qualifications for teaching with many misgivings; but the committee asked only for a specimen of his handwriting. He had no reason to be ashamed of this, for his penmanship, modeled upon the style prevailing during the previous century, was neat and regular. His principal trouble as a pedagogue was with the mathematical puzzles the large boys would bring him for

solution. A failure to solve these was a disgrace to a teacher in those days. As a descendant of the Greenleafs he inherited some facility with figures; but the problems handed him by the mischievous young men among his scholars cost him many a sleepless night. He wrote several poems during this winter, one of which, never published, was a rhymed epistle to the editor of the Haverhill "Gazette." It has been preserved by his daughter, Sarah S. Thayer, and is here given: —

[West] Amesbury, February 15, 1828.

Friend Thayer:

The troubles of a pedagogue
Nae mair my wanderin' muse shall clog;
The management of fool and rogue
Is fairly done with,
An' I can rhyme the same auld jog
My muse begun with.

Last night the Rev. Mr. Eaton
My Pandemonium took a seat in,
With half a dozen mair completin'
The school committee,
With questions hard my rabble treatin',
Devoid of pity.

It turned out weel enough, however;
My scholars answered pretty clever,
And baffled somehow each endeavor
To prove them fools,
And for the first time really never
Transgressed my rules.

I thank'd them for 't. I wish you could
Have heard my speech — 't was really good.
I said they had the gratitude
Of friends an' tutor,
And then advised them how they should
Behave in future.

No parson's sermon e'er was graver,
It had the very pulpit flavor,
Yet with the unction and the savor
Of my entreating
Was doubtless something of the quaver
Of Monthly Meeting.

This scrawl by Nathan Chase I send it,
In haste as thou may see I penned it;
To write a lengthy song or mend it,
I have no leisure.
To see thee soon I sure intend it,
With greatest pleasure.

. . . . . .

If you have got the "Rustics" done,
By Nathan please to sen' me one,
And I will try my hand upon
A short review,[1]
Before the critics have begun
To search it through.

But Nathan on his old gray mare
Sits waiting — I've no time to spare —
My best respects to Mrs. Thayer,
An' all who trouble you
With any question, how may fare
Their young friend,
"W."

In the edition of the poems of Robert Dinsmoor, there is a poem addressed to the author by John G. Whittier which is not included in his complete works. It was the first poem of his to appear in any book. This stanza of it sounds like the premonitory call of the "Voices of Freedom:" —

[1] This review of a volume of poems by Robert Dinsmoor, of Windham, N. H., known as the "Rustic Bard," may be found, with some additions, in Mr. Whittier's Prose Works, vol. ii. pp. 245–260. The poems were printed at the office of the Haverhill *Gazette*, during the winter of 1827-28.

"Shall vice an' crime that taint the nation,
Pass on unheeded ?
No ! let the muse her trumpet take
'Til auld offenders learn to shake,
An' tremble when they hear her wake
Her tones of thunder ;
'Til pride an' bloated ignorance quake,
An' gawkies wonder."

Mr. Whittier returned to the academy in the spring of 1828, and after six months of study his schooldays were ended. He had partially defrayed the expenses of his last term at the academy by posting the ledgers of a Haverhill merchant.

It was during his schooldays that Whittier wrote "The Song of the Vermonters, 1779," and some years after sent it anonymously to J. T. Buckingham, who published it in the "New England Magazine" in 1833. As it was not a "Quakerly" poem, its author never claimed it as his, and it was a surprise to him when, nearly sixty years after it was written, it appeared with his name attached to it. In the long meantime it had been extensively copied, and in some cases credited to Ethan Allen. In March, 1887, there was controversy about the authorship, and Mr. Whittier wrote this letter to the Boston "Transcript : " —

"'The Song of the Vermonters, by Ethan Allen,' was a piece of boyish mystification, written sixty years ago and printed anonymously. The only person who knew its authorship was my old friend Joseph T. Buckingham, and I supposed the secret died with him. We were both amused to find it regarded by antiquarian authorities as a

genuine relic of the old time. How the secret was discovered, a few years ago, I have never known. I have never intentionally written anything in favor of war, but a great deal against it."

THE SONG OF THE VERMONTERS, 1779.

Ho — all to the borders! Vermonters, come down,
With your breeches of deerskin and jackets of brown;
With your red woolen caps, and your moccasins, come,
To the gathering summons of trumpet and drum.

Come down with your rifles! Let gray wolf and fox
Howl on in the shade of their primitive rocks;
Let the bear feed securely from pig-pen and stall;
Here 's two-legged game for your powder and ball.

On our south come the Dutchmen, enveloped in grease;
And arming for battle while canting of peace;
On our east, crafty Meshech has gathered his band
To hang up our leaders and eat up our land.

Ho — all to the rescue! For Satan shall work
No gain for his legions of Hampshire and York!
They claim our possessions — the pitiful knaves —
The tribute we pay shall be prisons and graves!

Let Clinton and Ten Broek, with bribes in their hands,
Still seek to divide and parcel our lands;
We 've coats for our traitors, whoever they are;
The warp is of feathers — the filling of tar:

Does the "old Bay State" threaten? Does Congress complain?
Swarms Hampshire in arms on our borders again?
Bark the war-dogs of Britain aloud on the lake —
Let 'em come; what they can they are welcome to take.

What seek they among us? The pride of our wealth
Is comfort, contentment, and labor, and health,
And lands which, as Freemen, we only have trod,
Independent of all, save the mercies of God.

Yet we owe no allegiance, we bow to no throne,
Our ruler is law, and the law is our own;
Our leaders themselves are our own fellow-men,
Who can handle the sword, or the scythe, or the pen.

Our wives are all true, and our daughters are fair,
With their blue eyes of smiles and their light flowing hair,
All brisk at their wheels till the dark even-fall,
Then blithe at the sleigh-ride, the husking, and ball!

We 've sheep on the hillsides, we 've cows on the plain,
And gay-tasseled corn-fields and rank-growing grain;
There are deer on the mountains, and wood-pigeons fly
From the crack of our muskets, like clouds on the sky.

And there 's fish in our streamlets and rivers which take
Their course from the hills to our broad-bosomed lake;
Through rock-arched Winooski the salmon leaps free,
And the portly shad follows all fresh from the sea.

Like a sunbeam the pickerel glides through the pool,
And the spotted trout sleeps where the water is cool,
Or darts from his shelter of rock and of root
At the beaver's quick plunge, or the angler's pursuit.

And ours are the mountains, which awfully rise,
Till they rest their green heads on the blue of the skies;
And ours are the forests unwasted, unshorn,
Save where the wild path of the tempest is torn.

And though savage and wild be this climate of ours,
And brief be our season of fruits and of flowers,
Far dearer the blast round our mountains which raves
Than the sweet summer zephyr which breathes over slaves!

Hurrah for Vermont! For the land which we till
Must have sons to defend her from valley and hill;
Leave the harvest to rot on the fields where it grows,
And the reaping of wheat for the reaping of foes.

From far Michiscom's wild valley, to where
Poosoonsuck steals down from his wood-circled lair,
From Shocticook River to Lutterlock town —
Ho — all to the rescue! Vermonters, come down!

Come York or come Hampshire, come traitors or knaves,
If ye rule o'er our land, ye shall rule o'er our graves;
Our vow is recorded — our banner unfurled,
In the name of Vermont we defy all the world!

While Whittier was at the academy, his friend Garrison was in Boston, editing the "Philanthropist," a weekly paper devoted mainly to the cause of temperance, and published by William and William R. Collier. It was the first temperance paper ever published. The young agitator did not find in this occupation so wide a field of usefulness as he wished; there were other reforms he desired to advocate that his publishers did not favor. He thought of his Haverhill friend, and procured for him the offer of the editorship of the "Philanthropist." This offer came to Whittier while he was anxiously considering the question of a profession. In the following letter he asked the advice of a friend he had learned to trust: —

SHAD PARISH, 28th of 11th mo., 1828.

FRIEND A. W. THAYER, — I have been in a quandary ever since I left thee, whether I had better accept the offer of Friend Collier, or *nail* myself down to my seat, — for, verily, I could not be kept there otherwise, — and toil for the honorable and truly gratifying distinction of being considered "a good cobbler." . . . No — no — friend, it won't do. Thee might as well catch a weasel asleep, or the Old Enemy of Mankind in a parsonage-house, as find me contented with that distinction.

I have renounced college for the good reason that I have no disposition to humble myself to meanness for an education — crowding myself

through college upon the charities of others, and leaving it with a debt or an obligation to weigh down my spirit like an incubus, and paralyze every exertion. The professions are already crowded full to overflowing; and I, forsooth, because I have a miserable knack of rhyming, must swell the already enormous number, struggle awhile with debt and difficulties, and then, weary of life, go down to my original insignificance, where the tinsel of classical honors will but aggravate my misfortune. Verily, friend Thayer, the picture is a dark one — but from my heart I believe it to be true. What, then, remains for me? School-keeping — out upon it! The memory of last year's experience comes up before me like a horrible dream. No, I had rather be a tin-peddler, and drive around the country with a bunch of sheepskins hanging to my wagon. I had rather hawk essences from dwelling to dwelling, or practice physic between Colly Hill[1] and Country Bridge [the most sparsely settled portion of the East Parish].

Seriously — the situation of editor of the "Philanthropist" is not only respectable, but it is peculiarly pleasant to one who takes so deep an interest, as I really do, in the great cause it is laboring to promote. I would enter upon my task with a heart free from misanthropy, and glowing with that feeling that wishes well to all. I would rather have the memory of a Howard, a Wilberforce, and a Clarkson than the undying fame of Byron.

I may be wrong, but I confess I cannot see the

[1] "Corliss Hill" was usually called "Colly Hill" by those living in the neighborhood.

why and wherefore. I have written to friend Collier, but have entered into no engagement. Will you be kind enough to send by Chase the "Philanthropist" of to-day? I prepared the piece on card-playing for the "Gazette," but I own I was afraid of having my wig pulled, and so sent it to Boston.[1] I should like to see or hear from Mr. Carlton [the principal of the academy] before I do anything. He is one of the best men — to use a phrase of *my craft* — "that ever trod shoe leather."

If I had not written something about him, I would wish you to let Mr. Carlton see this. He will see my reasons — some of them, I mean — for they are "plenty as blackberries."

A poem entitled "To the Merrimack," written by Whittier, was published in the "Philanthropist" of June 6, 1828. A few lines of introduction by Garrison commend these verses, and call for original poems from other sources, with the proviso, "This invitation is meant for poets only."

Thus ended his schooldays, but this was only the beginning of his student life. By wide and well-chosen reading, he was constantly adding to his stores of information. While reveling in the fields of English literature, he became familiar through translations with ancient and current literature of other nations, and kept abreast of all political and reformatory movements.

[1] A short prose sketch, entitled "The Gamester," which was published in the *Philanthropist*, November 28, 1828, is here referred to.

It may be proper here to refer to an episode of Whittier's school life, concerning which erroneous impressions have gained currency. Some who have learned of his boyish love for his schoolmate, Evelina Bray, have concluded that this attachment accounts for certain passages in his poems, notably in "Memories." But this is not true. His affection for Miss Bray was a boy's love, for many reasons hopeless from the first, and it was later superseded by the deeper passion which found expression in "My Playmate," "Memories," and in many poems never collected. He was not twenty years old, and Evelina not seventeen, when they met at the academy. When the first edition of this work was published, Evelina Bray, then a widow, was living, and so also was the lady whose memory was enshrined in the poems to which reference has just been made. Both have since passed away, and there is now no reason for omitting mention of these friendships, which lasted through life. Evelina Bray was the daughter of a Marblehead shipmaster who made long voyages to the East Indies, and during his absences she was placed in the care of Captain William Story, brother of Justice Joseph Story of the United States Supreme Court. By him she was sent to the Haverhill Academy, and she had for roommate and classmate a daughter of Jonathan K. Smith, who became the wife of Rev. Dr. S. F. Smith, author of our national hymn. As they boarded near each other, she and Whittier fell into the habit of going to the academy and returning together. The attachment which here had its origin was hopeless from the first. He knew that his parents, strict Quakers,

could not approve of his marrying "out of society," and she knew her family would forbid a match with a poor farmer's boy, who had no worldly prospects worth mentioning, for his poetry could not be considered a resource; it was indeed an additional disqualification. So they called their love friendship, and if they had hopes did not venture to give expression to them. A year or two after they left school, when Whittier was editing a Boston paper, he called upon her one summer morning at her home in Marblehead. She did not venture to ask him to come in, but they took a stroll together to the old fort overlooking the harbor. This morning walk is commemorated in two stanzas of the poem "A Sea Dream": [1]

"Is this the wind, the soft sea-wind
That stirred thy locks of brown?
Are these the rocks whose mosses knew
The trail of thy light gown,
Where boy and girl sat down?

"I see the gray fort's broken wall,
The boats that rock below;
And, out at sea, the passing sails
We saw so long ago
Rose-red in morning's glow."

After this Marblehead incident, these schoolmates did not meet again for more than fifty years, with a single exception, and Whittier was never aware of this exception. By a strange chance, in their old age, the poet obtained her address, and they met at the reunion of the class of 1827,[2] held at Haver-

[1] It must not be thought that the remainder of the poem is otherwise than strictly imaginative. Only the stanzas quoted receive color from the Marblehead incident.

[2] This matter is treated more fully in *Whittier-Land*, pp. 68–72.

hill in 1885. Thereafter they were in friendly correspondence to the end of his life.

The lady Whittier had in mind when he wrote "My Playmate" and "Memories" was one whose family was distantly connected with his, Mary Emerson Smith. She too was a schoolmate, and the same objections that were potent in the first instance were fatal in the second. It would be marrying "out of society," and though now editing papers in Boston and Hartford, his outlook in a worldly point of view was far from flattering. His father had died, and his mother and sister were dependent upon him. Miss Smith removed to Cincinnati, and soon after married Judge Thomas, of Covington, Kentucky. She was in friendly correspondence with Whittier to the close of his life. During her widowhood she spent her summers at the North, and they occasionally met at the mountains. It was her picture Whittier drew in describing the beautiful girl in "Moll Pitcher," and it is interesting to note that some of the lines in "Memories" are identical with those in the early and never collected poem. The first stanza of "Memories" is copied with little change from this extract from "Moll Pitcher":

"A beautiful and sylph-like girl,
With step as soft as summer air —
With fresh, young lip, and brow of pearl,
Shadowed by many a natural curl
Of unconfined and flowing hair —
With the moist eye of pitying care,
Is bending like a seraph there:
A seeming child in everything
Save in her ripening maiden charms,
As nature wears the smile of spring,
When sinking into summer's arms."

CHAPTER III.

EDITORIAL EXPERIENCE AND LITERARY VENTURES.

1828–1832.

Mr. Whittier decided to enter the printing-office of the Colliers, and in December, 1828, we find him in Boston, a member of the household of Rev. Mr. Collier, a Baptist clergyman, the senior partner of the publishing firm. The Colliers, father and son, published two weekly papers and a monthly magazine. One of the weeklies was the "American Manufacturer," a political journal, friendly to Henry Clay. The monthly was the "Baptist Preacher." The partisan politics of the "Manufacturer" suited Mr. Whittier as well as did the cause represented by the "Philanthropist," and it was the Henry Clay paper that bore his name at the head of its editorial columns, on the 1st of January, 1829. The new editor began a spirited discussion of the tariff question, favoring duties to protect American industries, and also wrote sketches and poems for each number of his paper. It was a temperance poem with which he led off, entitled "Take Back the Bowl." This is the first stanza: —

> "Take back the bowl! I will not seal
> The hallowed memories of the past;
> They add no pangs to those I feel,
> Nor shadows on the future cast.

Aye, take it back! let others bring
Oblivion o'er the haunted soul;
My memory is a blessed thing —
Away! away! take back the bowl."

Nearly every number of the "Manufacturer" contained a poem by its editor, but scarcely any of them were considered by him worth preserving, even when he made his first collection of poems; and yet they were widely copied and gave him a constantly increasing reputation as a poet. In April, 1829, he began a series of satirical political poems, under the title of "Tariffiana." It was soon after this he wrote the poetical tribute to Henry Clay, which was recited by the partisans of that statesman throughout the country in each campaign when the gallant "Harry of the West" was a candidate.[1] About twenty-five years ago, the present writer asked permission to republish this poem as a literary curiosity. Mr. Whittier's reply was: "I have looked over the Henry Clay ballad, and have come to the conclusion that the least said about it the better. . . . It strikes me as grandiloquent and highfalutin." He was not ashamed in his later years of his youthful enthusiasm for Clay, but thought that he was in his day

[1] This poem was written for the Cincinnati *American*, and the date of its composition was 4th mo. 17, 1830, while he was at his home in Haverhill. In a note to the editor he says: "The perusal of an article from your paper has prompted the following feeble tribute to the services and merits of the Western statesman." It was copied into nearly all the papers of the party in the Union. The enemies of Clay had made vigorous assertion that he had been guilty of "bargain and corruption" in taking a place in the cabinet of J. Q. Adams, whose election he had secured by his influence in the House of Representatives.

much overrated. His influence was not so permanent as that of Calhoun, whom he considered the most powerful intellect of his period.

While Whittier was editing the "Manufacturer," the question of the tariff was complicated with that of the personal fitness of General Jackson for the Presidency. It is not surprising that the young Quaker non-resistant should fall in with the general feeling of his State, at that time, that it was unsafe to intrust to a warrior the destinies of a country that more than anything else needed years of peace for its growth and development. The mills of Massachusetts, from which much — and as it has proved not too much — was expected, were just beginning to be anxious for the success of the policy of the brilliant Kentuckian. Previous to 1828, all New England opposed the plan of developing American industries, to which Clay had converted the West and a part of the South. Webster opposed it for a while with all his massive strength, fearing it might put restraint upon the commerce of New England. Of the great men of that period, Clay alone had favored this policy from first to last, so that his name was thoroughly identified with it. When Clay was a candidate for the Presidency against Jackson, in 1832, Massachusetts was one of the few States that supported him, and by his earnest advocacy Whittier won political popularity, which was then as pleasing to him as literary reputation.

In a letter to Mr. A. W. Thayer, Mr. Whittier says under date 2d mo. 6, 1829: "The 'Manufacturer' goes down well, thanks to the gullibility

of the public, and we are doing well, very well. Have had one or two rubs from other papers, but I have had some compliments which were quite as much as my vanity could swallow. Have tolerable good society, Mrs. Hale and her literary club, etc. I am coming out for the tariff by and by — have done something at it already — but the *astonisher* is yet to come! Shall blow Cambreling and McDuffie sky-high."

When Garrison gave up his paper at Bennington, Vt., and went to Baltimore in company with Benjamin Lundy, Whittier said of him: "A bolder pen never portrayed the evils of slavery, and a better or kinder heart never throbbed with sympathy for the sufferings of humanity." At another time he wrote to Garrison: "I admire your plan of directing your efforts against those fearful evils, slavery, intemperance, and war. Heart and hand I unite with you in denouncing them. It shall be my endeavor to merit that name which I consider of all others the most worthy of our ambition, — the friend of man."

The following anecdote, as told by Mr. Whittier, illustrates this part of his career: Rev. Mr. Collier used to travel through the State canvassing for subscribers to his "Baptist Preacher," leaving his son William in charge of the office. Each number of the magazine contained a sermon by some eminent Baptist divine. On one occasion, when the old clergyman was away, no sermon was left for copy, and the day of publication of the "Preacher" was perilously near. William proposed to young Whittier to write a sermon in place of the one that

had failed to arrive. At this period of his life, Mr. Whittier said he felt more confident than he ever had since that he could do anything, from the writing of a sermon to the conducting of a political campaign. So the young Quaker readily undertook to fill the columns set apart for the great divines of that day, young Collier promising to lend his valuable assistance. The sermon was actually written and partly in type when the old gentleman returned, and a discourse under which a congregation had actually slept took the place of Mr. Whittier's effort. It is easy to believe that this first and only sermon of the young poet was more than worthy of the space it came so near occupying, for it was a serious essay, and no burlesque.

It was during his employment in this office that he first met Charles Sumner. An anti-Masonic journal, in which Sheriff Sumner was interested, was for a time printed in the office of the "Manufacturer." One day the sheriff's son, Charles, came in with the copy. He was then a student at Harvard, seventeen years of age, a tall, slender, graceful youth. Whether the copy he brought was written by himself, or sent by his father, Mr. Whittier did not recall, but he had a vivid remembrance of the young man who in twenty years was to become one of his most intimate friends.

He remained in this Boston printing-office until August, 1829, when he was called home by the failing health of his father, and the necessity of caring for the farm. Of his meagre salary of

nine dollars a week he saved about one half, and this went toward freeing the farm from the incumbrance of the mortgage. His residence in Boston had given him access to large libraries, an opportunity he improved to the utmost. He wrote several poems during these few months that were widely copied. "The Sicilian Vespers," "The Earthquake," and "The Spirit of the North" belong to this period.

Soon after he gave up the editorship of the "Manufacturer," he wrote from Haverhill to a friend in New York, who had been a fellow-boarder at the Colliers', and who had expressed surprise at his giving up the paper: "Why should you be surprised? You know what kind of a concern it was; you know, if I mistake not, my dissatisfaction." From this it would appear that he had other reasons beside the illness of his father for resigning his first editorship.[1] We find hints in

[1] In the same letter, he makes this reference to his former room-mate, Garrison: "Have you seen Garrison's Baltimore paper, the *Genius of Universal Emancipation?* I had a letter from him the other day; he says he has been in low spirits ever since he left Boston; says he is home-sick, and what is worse, *love-sick*, which last sickness he justly supposes will be immortal. . . . I have become a notable fellow in gallantry of late; I mean old-fashioned gallantry, however. I have given my whiskers a more ferocious appearance, and take the liberty of frightening into good nature those who will not be complaisant of their own accord." His correspondent, more than thirty years after, sent him this old letter, and received the following comment upon it, dated Amesbury, 1st mo. 2, 1860: "I was about as much surprised to read that old letter of my boyhood as if I had seen the ghost of my former self. It was a very absurd and ridiculous epistle, — and the utter folly of it is more striking from the fact that at that very time I was in reality a shy, timid

other letters of this period that he had to contend with jealousy and detraction in the office of his employers.

Whittier remained in Haverhill until his father's death, in June, 1830, spending all his spare hours in study, and in preparing contributions in prose and verse for various periodicals. For the first six months of 1830 he edited the Haverhill "Gazette," doing most of his work upon this paper at home, three miles away from the office of publication. He also contributed poems and political essays to the "New England Review," of Hartford, Conn., a political paper then edited by George D. Prentice. Mr. Whittier's ambition at this time had taken a political turn, and his studies were in that direction. Mr. Prentice was much pleased with the contributions he received from the young Quaker on the Haverhill farm, and a friendly correspondence sprang up between them. The only letter from Prentice that is preserved of this correspondence is one written January 2, 1830. He was at a hotel in Providence, enjoying a short respite from his editorial work. The letter, which is a long one, is frolicsome in its tone, and gives the impression that he and his correspondent were intimate friends. And yet they had never met. If Prentice had been better acquainted with the Quaker lad he was addressing, he would hardly have written the first paragraph here quoted: —

recluse, afraid of a shadow, especially the shadow of a woman. There is a period in life — a sort of tadpole state, between the boy and the man — when any sort of pretense, egotism, and self-conceit may be expected."

"Whittier, I wish you were seated by my side, for I assure you that my situation, just now, is very much to my particular satisfaction. Here am I in my hotel, with a good-natured fire in front of me, and a bottle of champagne at my left hand. Can you imagine a situation more to a good fellow's mind? . . . Then you have more imagination than judgment. . . . The gods be praised that I am not a member of the temperance society!

"Would to fortune I could come to Haverhill, before my return to Hartford — but the thing is impossible. I am running short both of time and money. Well, we can live on and love, as we have done. Once or twice I have even thought that my feelings towards you had more of romance in them than they possibly could have if we were acquainted with each other. I never yet met for the first time with a person whose name I had learned to revere, without feeling on the instant that the beautiful veil with which my imagination had robed him was partially rent away. If you cannot explain this matter, you are no philosopher."

It would be easy to quote a great many complimentary newspaper comments on Whittier's poetry appearing from week to week, as when the "New England Review" copied some lines from "The Minstrel Girl," a poem not thought worthy of being published in any, not even in the first, of Whittier's collections of verse, with the sweeping statement, "We do not know that we have ever seen the following description of sunset equaled." The wonder is that such a reputation as he was certainly acquiring should have grown out of a

series of poems that so soon sank into oblivion. For about five years, say from 1827 to 1832, Whittier was writing and publishing a poem almost every week, scarcely twenty of which are now extant. They are to be found only in the files of the several papers in which they first appeared, or into which they were copied. The literary fame so freely promised for him has indeed crowned his work, but it is not based on anything then accomplished.

As the elder Whittier's failing health had called the young editor away from his office, so now the death of his father left him free to resume his occupation, and the acquaintance which he had formed with Prentice led to a new opening. Prentice had been asked by Henry Clay to come to Lexington, Ky., and write his biography, in anticipation of a nomination for the Presidency in 1832. The "New England Review," which Prentice edited, was owned by leading politicians of Connecticut, of the party favorable to Clay. When they learned they were to lose Prentice for a time, they asked him to recommend some one to fill his place. His advice to send for Whittier was acted upon. This call to edit the leading party paper of a State, with the local politics of which he had no acquaintance, was a great surprise to the young poet; but it was in the line of his principal ambition, and he did not hesitate to accept the position. While connected with the "Manufacturer," he had come into personal communication with the principal men of his party in Massachusetts, and had been making a study of political economy, in

the expectation of taking up political journalism as his life work. He had never received pay for his verses, and had not thought of depending upon poetry for his bread. The salary offered him as editor of the "Review" was about $500 a year. Small as it was, he now saw a prospect, by the practice of strict economy, of wiping out the debt that had incumbered the Haverhill farm. This part of his ambition was soon gratified.

If he was surprised by the offer of this editorship, he was accustomed to say he thought the Connecticut statesmen, who came into the office of the "Review" to see the new editor, were equally surprised to find at the desk that had been occupied by the genteel and spirited Prentice a shy lad, in homespun clothes of Quaker cut, straight from a Massachusetts farm. He must at first glance have appeared out of place in the editorial chair of their State paper, in the midst of a fierce political campaign, and as the successor of one of the most trenchant and dashing editors America had produced. Among his intimates, Whittier was always a ready and sprightly talker, but among strangers he held his peace. His bright eyes, and the quick intelligence of his handsome face, must have speedily reassured those interested in the paper he was to edit. They saw that his homely Quaker clothes covered a youth of good parts, honest, earnest, intelligent, and ambitious. By listening to the talk of the party leaders who made his office their rendezvous, he soon mastered the shibboleth of local politics, and gave good satisfaction.

It would be difficult to find two men more entirely

unlike than were Prentice and Whittier. Prentice delighted in giving pain with his caustic pen, and he used his great power of satire with reckless disregard of the feelings of his opponents. Whittier was a man of the sweetest nature, kind and courteous, but of the truest courage. He was content to disarm an antagonist without drawing a drop of his blood. They had each achieved some distinction as writers of both prose and verse. Prentice was five years the senior, and is now best remembered as the witty and slashing editor of the Louisville, Ky., "Journal." He did not come back to Connecticut as he had expected. In his editorial of farewell Prentice said of his successor: —

"I cannot do less than congratulate my readers on the prospect of their more familiar acquaintance with a gentleman of such powerful energies, and such exalted purity and sweetness of character. I have made some enemies among those whose good opinion I value, but no rational man can ever be the enemy of Mr. Whittier."

Miss M. A. Dodge, "Gail Hamilton," contributes to this memoir the following report of a conversation she once had with Mr. Whittier about his acceptance of the editorship of the Hartford paper: —

George D. Prentice, he said, had been writing letters to his own paper, purporting to come from the "Man in the Moon." After a while they were discontinued for several weeks, and then one appeared which Whittier thought was from a different hand; so he tried one himself and sent it on, hardly expecting ever to hear from it again;

but in course of time back it came to him in print, with a letter from Prentice saying he would like to hear from him again. It was upon this letter that he first saw himself called "Mr." After a while there came another letter — he did not have many letters then — saying Mr. Prentice was to be gone six months and would like to have him take charge of the paper during his absence. He told his mother, but no one else, thinking they would laugh at him. His father had recently died, and he felt he was needed at home. He lay awake all night, and finally concluded he would go. Being asked how he could know in the least what to do, he said he did not — he knew nothing about it — but took care to conceal his ignorance. When he was going to write on any subject he read up on it. After he had been in Hartford a few weeks, he opened one of the exchanges, — the "Catskill Recorder," he believed, — and there was a long article headed "John G. Whittier," filled with abuse and ridicule of him and his editorship. It was a terrible blow to him. He hid the paper so that his publishers and the people about the office should not see it, and every once in a while he would take it out and read it over. He went home to his boarding-house, and some of the young ladies, seeing marks of trouble in his face, asked him what was the matter; but he did not tell them. Every paper he opened, he expected to see this copied at full length. He did not dare say much about it in his paper, because he did not want his readers to know what had been said of him. Finally, he wrote a letter to the Catskill man, remonstrating

with him; to which an answer came worse than the original offense, saying that if he was so thin-skinned as that he would better quit the newspaper business, for it was not a circumstance to what would happen as time went on. A few days afterward, the New York "Courier and Enquirer," then edited by the Noahs, he thought, and Mr. James Brooks, came to the office with a flattering notice, and marked "Please exchange;" this comforted him. He thought if a great paper like this praised him, it was not so much matter about the little Catskiller. Bryant's paper, the "Evening Post," followed suit, and some editors asked him to call on them if he ever came to New York. Prentice did not return, and he stayed in Hartford eighteen months. There was much dissipation there. He had been in town but a little while before they made him a member of a club composed of the young men of the first families, who did little but drink and carouse. He only went one night; did not care about such things. He would not drink with them. During his residence in Hartford, he once visited New York, and, as requested, called upon the editors of the "Courier and Enquirer." Major Noah was in, a large, portly Jew. "Is this Mr. Whittier?" "Yes." "Of the Hartford 'Review'?" "Yes." "Ah! yes, yes, a younger man than I supposed." Mr. Brooks was ill, so he called at his house and was very courteously entreated, and went to the club in the evening — where he saw oysters for the first time. Did he enjoy it? No, not very much; he was rather shy and knew scarcely any one. While go-

ing by a theatre one night, he saw a man, too drunk to stand alone, holding on by the railings of the steps. As he turned to look at him, the man said, "Don't thee come in here, Quaker, this is no place for thee. I will report thee to Friend Jenkins, and he will turn thee out of the Monthly Meeting."

If he had been disposed to attend places of vain amusement, his Quaker dress, he found, would have been a constant protection. He entered heartily into social life in Hartford, and left a pleasant memory in many families. In a reminiscent letter that is published in the "History of Hartford County," he says: —

"I boarded first at the old Lunt tavern, and afterward at Jonathan Law's, formerly postmaster of Hartford. I knew well some of the best people in the little city, Judge Russ, Hon. Mr. Trumbull, Hon. Martin Welles, Dr. Todd, Mrs. Sigourney; Isaac E. Crary — afterward General Crary, member of Congress from Michigan — and Charles Emerson, then young lawyers there, wrote for my paper, as did also F. A. P. Barnard, now president of Columbia College, New York."

The intimacy with Barnard, who was at that time a teacher in the asylum for the deaf and dumb, sprang from the fact that both of them were especially interested in Eastern history and romance. It was for this reason that "Miriam," an Eastern poem, was dedicated to him; its opening lines refer to the old days at Hartford: —

> "The years are many since, in youth and hope,
> Under the Charter Oak, our horoscope
> We drew thick-studded with all favoring stars."

Mrs. Sigourney was in the height of her popularity as a writer, when Whittier was in Hartford, and of her he says in a letter written long after her death: "I knew Mrs. Sigourney well, when as a boy I came to Hartford. Her kindness to the young rustic stranger I shall never forget." Late in life he wrote these lines for the tablet placed near her pew in Christ Church: —

> "She sang alone, ere womanhood had known
> The gift of song which fills the air to-day:
> Tender and sweet, a music all her own
> May fitly linger where she knelt to pray."

The first two or three weeks of the month of January, 1831, were spent by Mr. Whittier in the city of New York. He was at this time editing the "Review," but there is not a word in his paper referring to this visit, and only an indirect reference after his return to his editorial desk to the fact that he had been absent. All that we know of this episode is found in his correspondence with his friend, Jonathan Law,[1] of Hartford, in whose family he resided for some months while editing the "Review." It was a two days' journey from Hartford to New York, by stage to New Haven, and by steamboat thence to New York. The steamboat was caught in the severest storm known for many years, and the first letter to Mr. Law, written in mid-passage, gives a graphic description of the miseries of the voyage, enlivened with humorous

[1] Mr. Law was an educated and scholarly man, familiar with the poets, and Mr. Whittier had occasion to acknowledge great indebtedness to him for his aid. He had a large house and a good library. He was postmaster at Hartford from 1800 to 1829.

comment upon many distressing situations. The letter closes with the enigmatical remark, "To-morrow I shall be busy; whether for good or ill, I know not. All that men in our situation *can* do shall be done." He was accompanied and assisted by a young lawyer, Mr. Isaac E. Crary.[1] They arrived Saturday, January 1, and on the next day he wrote: —

"I have reached New York at last, and am already surrounded with papers and musty documents. I find not so much difficulty as I anticipated. *The Ghent treaty is safe.* It was not among the missing. My first letter was dated on board the steamboat — that floating pandemonium — that pestilential hospital ship. I shudder even now at the bare thought of it. We spent Friday night on the boat, a few miles below the city. It was almost a sleepless one. We are now sitting in our room, Crary and myself; there is a noble fire in the grate, and we are working away for dear life. We are, in fact, perfect hermits, and we abide by our room as Diogenes did in his tub. . . . We have no news to relate, none in the world; and yet, as I promised to write, I fulfill my engagement. I have seen no one as yet. The editor of the 'Mercantile Advertiser' has just called on me, in the name of Forrest, the tragedian, of Halleck, Wetmore, and Leggett, of

[1] Crary went to Michigan soon after, and became delegate from the Territory in Congress. He was also member of Congress from Michigan when it became a State, and was largely instrumental in developing the plans by which the grant of the general government for educational purposes became a fund of great and permanent value.

New York, and of Hill, of Boston, to attend a convivial meeting of the *Literati*, this evening. I have declined. I have no idea of soaking my brains in champagne or Madeira, when I have so much use for them. At present I must have a clear lookout, or all may go for the 'Old Harry' instead of our own Harry."

This last sentence and the reference to the Treaty of Ghent indicate that the search was for some part of the record of Henry Clay. It was to assist George D. Prentice in preparing the "Life of Clay," two editions of which were published. Pages 102–116 in both editions and pp. 254–261 in the second edition were written by Whittier; also, probably, the first Note in the Appendix. A fortnight later he wrote to his Hartford friend, under date of 1st month, 15th: —

"I am yet in the land of the living, and would give half a kingdom to be in your goodly city of Hartford. We have had a wearisome time of it, and the end has not yet come. We have been sick, and given over to the buffeting of the 'Indigo Demons.' Verily, we have seen enough of vexation, enough of agony, spiritual and bodily, to make our very hairs as white as those of Methuselah when a thousand winters had gone over his venerable head. We have ransacked every street; we have turned over the huge folios of every library; we have read, inquired, cogitated, and written and rewritten, until our brains are in a worse state than Ovid's chaos."

The files of the "Review," from July, 1830, to March, 1831, show a large amount of work from

Whittier's own hand, not only in political leaders, but in poems and sketches. There are twenty-three poems signed with his initials, beside several that are probably his, not signed; also, several legends and short stories. In the first number of the paper after he took charge of it, July 19, 1830, appears a poem, "To L. E. L., Author of the Improvisatrice," which was copied in other periodicals during the lifetime of Letitia E. Landon, but which Mr. Whittier never placed in any collection of his works. Another poem, "Christ in the Tempest," was published August 16, 1830. This became familiar to the public in Emerson's "First Class Reader." Of this he wrote to Rev. R. H. Howard, in 1888: —

"It was for some reason omitted by my publishers; I think because it was not thought valuable in a merely literary point of view. I had not seen it for a long time; but I have just hunted it up, and find it better than many things in my collected poems. The storm on the little lake may have been exaggerated; but as a whole the piece is not altogether unworthy, certainly, so far as the sentiment is concerned."

Here are the first and last stanzas of the poem:

"Storm on the midnight waters. The vast sky
Is stooping with the thunder. Cloud on cloud
Reels heavily in the darkness, like a shroud
Shook by some warning spirit from the high
And terrible wall of heaven. The mighty wave
Tosses beneath its shadow, like the bold
Upheavings of a giant from the grave
Which bound him prematurely to its cold
And desolate bosom. Lo, they mingle now —

Tempest and heaving wave, along whose brow
Trembles the lightning from its thick fold.

. . . . . .

"Dread Ruler of the tempest! Thou before
Whose presence boweth the uprisen storm,
To whom the waves do homage round the shore
Of many an island empire! If the form
Of the frail dust beneath Thine eye may claim
Thine infinite regard, oh, breathe upon
The storm and darkness of man's soul the same
Quiet and peace and humbleness which came
O'er the roused waters, where Thy voice had gone,
A minister of peace — to conquer in Thy name."

The other poems of this period which appear in his collected works are: "Isabella of Austria," "The Frost Spirit," "The Fair Quakeress," "The Cities of the Plain," and "Bolivar." This last-named poem was written one month after the death of the South American patriot. In the "Review" for October 18, 1830, three of his poems appear, and the best of the three, "New England," was unsigned, but to the copy found among his papers he has appended his initials. This poem, with the exception of the last stanza, appears in "Moll Pitcher." The self-assertion in this last stanza probably seemed to him too strong at the time of its publication. But it reveals the high spirit of his youth, and now that its speculation may be looked upon as fulfilled prophecy, it properly belongs in these pages: —

"Land of my fathers! — if my name,
Now humble and unwed to fame,
Hereafter burn upon the lip,
As one of those which may not die,
Linked in eternal fellowship
With visions pure and strong and high —

If the wild dreams, which quicken now
The throbbing pulse of heart and brow,
Hereafter take a real form
Like spectres changed to beings warm;
And over temples worn and gray
The star-like crown of glory shine,—
Thine be the bard's undying lay,
The murmur of his praise be thine!"

He busied himself at this time in the preparation of his first book, "Legends of New England, in Prose and Verse." No advertisement of this book appeared in the paper he was conducting until the week before it was issued.[1] It was printed in the office of the "Review." There are now but few copies of this earliest venture of his in existence. Whenever, in later life, Mr. Whittier obtained possession of a copy, he destroyed it. On one occasion he paid five dollars for a copy, and burned it. He said he looked it through, and "it seemed like somebody else."

When his "Legends of New England" ap-

[1] This book was published February 23, 1831, by Havener & Phelps, Hartford. The first announcement of it contained the name of the author, but the advertisements that appeared after it was issued do not mention the author's name. The table of contents was as follows: "The Midnight Attack; The Weird Gathering; The Rattlesnake Hunter; Metacom; The Murdered Lady; The Unquiet Sleeper: The Haunted House; The Spectre Warriors; The Powow; The Spectre Ship; The Human Sacrifice; The Indian's Tale; A Night among the Wolves; The White Mountains; The Black Fox: The Mother's Revenge; The Aerial Omens; The Last Norridgewock." Nine of these pieces are poems, and of these only two are to be found in his complete works, published in 1888, viz., "Metacom" and "Mount Agiochook," which last title has been substituted for "The White Mountains." Not one of the prose sketches has been deemed worthy of preservation.

peared, he had been five years before the public as a writer. At this time more than one hundred poems of his had been printed in various periodicals. Only twenty of these are to be found in any extant edition of his works. It must be acknowledged that his judgment in suppressing them was correct. The few specimens of his early work that he allowed to appear in the latest and fullest collection of his poems are sufficient to show the first steps of his literary progress.

It may be said that some of the discarded early poems are devoted to phases of "the tender passion." There is no reason to suppose that he was not possessed of at least the average susceptibility of young people, and yet the verses to which reference is here made must not be taken as the measure of that susceptibility. His youthful letters to intimate friends abound in passages like this to Edwin Harriman, written from Boston, in 1829, while editing the "Manufacturer:" —

"Here I have been all day trying to write something for my paper, but what with habitual laziness, and a lounge or two in the Athenæum Gallery, I am altogether unfitted for composition. . . . There are a great many pretty girls at the Athenæum, and I like to sit there and remark upon the different figures that go flitting by me, like aerial creatures just stooping down to our dull earth, to take a view of the beautiful creations of the painter's genius. I love to watch their airy motions, notice the dark brilliancy of their fine eyes, and observe the delicate flush stealing over their cheeks, but, trust me, my heart is untouched, — cold

and motionless as a Jutland lake lighted up by the moonshine. I always did love a pretty girl. Heaven grant there is no harm in it! . . . Mr. Garrison will deliver an address on the Fourth of July. He goes to see his Dulcinea every other night almost, but is fearful of being 'shipped off,' after all, by her. Lord help the poor fellow, if it happens so. I like my business very well; but hang me if I like the people here. I am acquainted with a few girls, and have no wish to be so with many."

In March, 1831, he was called home to assist his mother in the settlement of his father's estate, and he remained until June of that year. From Haverhill he sent several letters to the "Review." One of these gives a lively account of his stage-ride homeward, and another is devoted to politics. Gideon Welles, afterward Abraham Lincoln's Secretary of the Navy, was then a leader in the Democratic party of Connecticut, and edited the Hartford "Times." Mr. Whittier's political discussions during his stay in Hartford were mainly with this champion of the Democracy. While at Haverhill he continued his work upon the "Review," his articles being sent by mail. In one of his letters he says: "A little sister of mine, a girl of sixteen summers, has, like her luckless brother, a disposition to make rhymes. The following, which I have somewhat feloniously and of malice aforethought abstracted from her writing-desk, is a specimen of her versifying." The poem is a description of an autumn sunset, of which this is the first stanza: —

"Oh, there is beauty in the sky — a widening of gold
Upon each light and breezy cloud, and on each vapory fold!
The autumn wind has died away, and the air has not a sound,
Save the sighing of the withered leaves as they fall upon the ground."

That the reputation he was then acquiring as a poet did not satisfy his ambition is shown in the following extract from a letter which he wrote while editing the "Review," to Mrs. L. C. Tuthill, a contributor to his paper, residing in New Haven: —

HARTFORD, 16th of 4th mo. 1831.

. . . You ask me to write of myself. Alas, it is a sorry subject, and I fear would be to you wholly uninteresting. Disappointment in a thousand ways has gone over my heart and left it dust. Yet, I still look forward with high anticipations. I have placed the goal of my ambition high — but with the blessing of God it shall be reached. The world has at last breathed into my bosom a portion of its own bitterness, and I now feel as if I could wrestle manfully in the strife of men. If my life is spared, the world shall know me in a loftier capacity than *as a writer of rhymes.* [The italics are Whittier's own.] There — is not that boasting? But I have said it with a strong pulse and a swelling heart, and I shall strive to verify it.

On the 14th of July, 1831, he wrote to his friend, Jonathan Law: —

"I have been driving about 'from pillar to post' ever since I left Hartford. The worst of it is, that

all this locomotion has not improved my health, which is still in a rather suspicious state. I have been away 'Down East,' and have just returned. I have not received a line from Hartford since I left; I do wish to hear from you, as I shall probably remain in this section two or three weeks longer. I want some information about political matters in Connecticut. . . . My sister Elizabeth has been obliged to leave the academy on account of her health. What a poor miserable thing is human nature, after all! —

> 'The slightest breath can shake it,
> And the light zephyr easily can break it.'"

Before definitely giving up his editorial work on the "Review," he made another trip to his home in Haverhill, and was accompanied by Dr. Crane, as in the condition of his health it was not thought prudent for him to travel alone. But he sent the physician home with this note to Mr. Law, dated October 27, 1831: "You have got Dr. Crane; but for me, I am off for Salem, notwithstanding the doctor's pledge to return me 'hale and breathing,' or with my bones neatly done up in his traveling trunk. I shall probably see Hartford in the course of a week or ten days."

His expectation of returning to Hartford was not realized, although early in December he started from Haverhill with that intention. In his absence he had been appointed a delegate from Connecticut, to attend a convention of the National Republican party, that was to meet in Baltimore on the 12th of December, to nominate

a President and Vice-President of the United States. As a friend of Henry Clay, he desired to attend this convention, and to visit Hartford on his way. He made the attempt, but upon reaching Boston found he had not the strength to proceed farther; indeed, he was too ill to return at once to Haverhill.

It became necessary now definitely to resign his editorship of the "New England Review," and to give up his Hartford life, which he did the first of January, 1832. He left behind, apparently, the copy for the "Literary Remains of J. G. C. Brainard," a Connecticut poet, who died in 1828. He edited the volume and wrote a biographical sketch, but in a letter to a Hartford friend, written in the autumn of 1832, he says: "I have not seen a copy of it; the proof was not sent, and from an extract or two which I have seen, it is pretty well spiced with mistakes." Meanwhile he was living at home in Haverhill, with more leisure indeed, and with many plans, but with that consciousness of physical weakness which thereafter was seldom absent.

The following letter to his friend, Jonathan Law, dated Haverhill, January 5, 1832, shows how hard it was for him to give up his political and literary work, at the demand of a persistent disease: —

"Well, I have *at last* written, — or am going to, — being the third time in which I have actually written to you since I left Hartford, and delayed because I expected to be the bearer of my own epistle. I have been at home — that is to say, in

this vicinity — all the time, — half sick, half mad. For the last fortnight I have been kept close. Mr. Barnard has doubtless told you that I started for Hartford about three or four weeks since, and was obliged to return. Now you may suppose that I have got the 'hypo.' No such thing. It is all as real as the nose on my face, this illness of mine, — alas, too real. Nor am I under the cerulean influence of the blue devils *now*. The last blue-visaged imp has departed with my exorcism ringing in his ears — 'Conjuro te, sceleratissime, abire ad tuum locum.' But nonsense apart, my dear sir, what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue! We start vigorously forward with something for our object — up, up, among the very clouds; we toil on, we sacrifice *present* ease and *present* happiness; we turn from *real* blessings to picture *future* ones — unsubstantial as the fabric of the summer cloud or the morning mist. We press on for a time, the overtaxed nerves relax from their first strong tension, until the mysterious machinery of our existence is shattered and impeded, until the mind realizes that, chained down to material grossness, and clogged with a distempered and decaying mortality, it cannot rise to heaven. Perhaps it is well — indeed we know it is — that this should be the end of human ambition. But, oh, how humiliating to the vanity of our nature!

"Now, don't imagine for one moment that I have become morose and melancholy. Far from it. I am among anxious friends. I have a thousand sources of enjoyment, even in the midst of

corporeal suffering. I have an excellent society here to visit and receive visits from, — my early companions and those who have grown up with me, who have known me long and well. I have spent some time in Boston, Salem, Marblehead, Andover, etc., among 'brave men and fair women;' have dabbled somewhat in local politics, and am extensively popular just now on that account. The girls here are nice specimens of what girls should be. You will find a description of one or two of them in a poem [1] which I shall send you in a few weeks, perhaps in less time, — a poem partly written at your house, and which is being published. It lay around in fragments, staring me everywhere in the face, and at last, to get rid of it, I have given it over to the bookmakers. They will have a hard bargain of it.

"Decency forgive me! I 've filled up two pages with that most aristocratic little pronoun which represents the writer of this epistle. Misery makes a man an egotist, the world over."

In a letter to Mrs. Sigourney, a month later, February 2, 1832, he repeats this information about his work, but adds intimation of another literary scheme not elsewhere noted.[1]

"A thousand thanks for your kind letter, which is now before me! It has acted upon my melancholy feelings like a spell of exorcism.

> 'Welcome as the odor fanned
> Around the weary seaman's keel
> From some unseen and flowery land.'

[1] "Moll Pitcher." The poem "Memories" contains one of the portraits copied from the earlier poem.

I say *melancholy* feelings — they are so only in consequence of ill health, and visit me only at long intervals. In this vicinity I have everything to make me happy, — quiet, contentment, and a large circle of warm and kind-hearted friends. And yet, I long to visit Hartford; it has for me a thousand pleasant associations; and the opportunity which my residence there afforded me of a personal acquaintance with yourself is to me a constant source of self-congratulation. When your letter arrived, I had just been reading for the second time your admirable story in the 'Amaranth.' I know not what others may say, — indeed I care not, — but I do honestly think that the short story of Jehiel Wigglesworth, aside from the laudable object which the author evidently had in view, contains more *nature*, a better delineation of New England character, and a closer imitation of the real Yankee dialect, than all the tales and novels which have heretofore filled the circulating libraries or the newspapers of this country.

"I intended when I left Hartford to proceed immediately to the West. But a continuance of ill health has kept me at home. I have scarcely done anything this winter. There have been few days in which I have been able to write with any degree of comfort. I have indeed thrown together a poem of some length, the title of which ('Moll Pitcher') has very little connection with the subject. This poem I handed to a friend of mine, and he has threatened to publish it. It will not have the advantage or disadvantage of my name, however.

I have also written, or rather begun to write, a work of fiction, which shall have for its object the reconciliation of the North and the South, — being simply an endeavor to do away with some of the prejudices which have produced enmity between the Southron and the Yankee. The style which I have adopted is about half-way between the abruptness of Laurence Sterne and the smooth gracefulness of W. Irving. I may fail, — indeed I suspect I shall, — but I have more philosophy than poetry in my composition, and if I am disappointed in one project, I have only to lay it aside and take another up. If I thought I deserved half the compliments you have been pleased to bestow upon my humble exertions, I should certainly be in danger of becoming obnoxious to the charge of vanity. The truth is, I love poetry, with a love as warm, as fervent, as sincere, as any of the more gifted worshipers at the temple of the Muses. I consider its gift as something holy and above the fashion of the world. In the language of Francis Bacon, 'The Muses are in league with Time,' — which spares their productions in its work of universal desolation. But I *feel* and know that

> 'To other chords than mine belong
> The breathing of immortal song.'

And in consequence, I have been compelled to trust to other and less pleasant pursuits for distinction and profit. Politics is the only field now open for me, and there is something inconsistent in the character of a poet and modern politician. People of the present day seem to have ideas

similar to those of that old churl of a Plato, who was for banishing all poets from his perfect republic.

"Did you ever read these lines from Halleck? —

> 'But when the grass grows green above me,
> And those who know me now and love me
> Are sleeping by my side,
> Will it avail me aught that men
> Tell to the world with lip and pen
> That I have lived and died? —
> *No;* if a garland for my brow
> Is growing, let me have it *now*,
> While I 'm alive to wear it;
> And if in whispering my name
> There 's music in the voice of fame,
> Like Garcia's, *let me hear it!*'

Now I feel precisely so. I would have fame with me *now*, — or not at all. I would not choose between a nettle or a rose to grow over my grave. If I am worthy of fame, I would ask it now, — now in the springtime of my years; when I might share its smile with the friends whom I love, and by whom I am loved in return. But who would ask a niche in that temple where the *dead* alone are crowned; where the green and living garland waves in ghastly contrast over the pale, cold brow and the visionless eye; and where the chant of praise and the voice of adulation fall only on the deafened ear of Death?

"I have written to my friend B. on the subject of the 'Amaranth,' and will take care to do your other errand in Boston. I have a book in my possession — the poems of Alonzo Lewis, who wished me to hand it to you. I shall be in Hartford as

soon in the spring as the traveling will admit. Will you remember me kindly to my friend Stamiatiades? I am happy to see that the people of Hartford are alive on the subject of education in Greece. My friend Mr. Law will hand you this. Excuse this hasty, and I fear incoherent, letter, and believe me that nothing would afford me greater pleasure than a speedy return to Hartford."

The poem to which he refers in the above letters was being printed in Newburyport. It was published by Carter & Hendee, Boston, in a pamphlet of twenty-eight octavo pages. It was dedicated to Dr. Eli Todd, of Hartford, and the name of the author does not appear on its title-page. The following note is given by way of preface: —

"The following pages, dear reader, are published neither for a poetical reputation nor for money. The former is unfortunately a most indefinite, and too often 'stale, flat, and unprofitable,' commodity, inasmuch as it could puzzle the French cook, who made fifty different dishes of a parsnip, to make either meat or drink of it. As for the latter, I have not enough of the poetical mania in my disposition to dream of converting, by an alchemy more potent than that of the old philosophers, a limping couplet into a brace of doubloons; or a rickety stanza into a note of hand. 'Moll Pitcher' (there 's music in the name) is the offspring of a few weeks of such leisure as is afforded by indisposition, and is given to the world in all its original negligence, — the thoughts fresh as when first conceived."

The story of the poem is of a maiden consulting

the witch in regard to her lover, who is at sea. The witch has some cause of grievance against the maiden, and frightens her into a mild insanity by predictions of dire calamity. The lover returns safely, and, finding his betrothed in this demented condition, gradually, by love's ministrations, recalls her to her right mind, and at length "the thousand fancies which were nursed in madness vanish one by one." The concluding scene is at the death-bed of the witch, whose last hours are soothed by the gentle care of a daughter of the woman she so cruelly wronged, and to whom in dying she gives her blessing.

In 1840, a revised edition of "Moll Pitcher" was published by Joseph Healy, of Philadelphia, this edition for the first time connecting Mr. Whittier's name with the poem, and with it was printed "The Minstrel Girl," which was originally published in John Neal's "Yankee," in 1829. This last-named poem as a whole is unworthy of reproduction, but contains some stanzas of merit. It makes eight pages of the 12mo pamphlet.

Mr. Whittier was more successful in suppressing "Moll Pitcher" than he was with his later poem, "Mogg Megone." It has never been published in any collection of his works, and as a whole does not deserve to be perpetuated.

Mr. Whittier sent several contributions of prose and verse to the "Pearl," published by Isaac C. Pray, first in Hartford and afterward in Boston.

"The Prisoner for Debt" was originally published in the "Pearl" for December 12, 1835, and the date, 1849, given to it in the edition of 1888 is

an error. It had when first published these lines of Pierpont as a preface: —

> " Cast down, great God, the fanes
> That to unhallowed gains
> Round us have risen;
> Temples whose priesthood pore
> Moses and Jesus o'er,
> Then bolt the poor man's prison."

Among the periodicals to which Mr. Whittier contributed from 1829 to 1832, beside those already named, were the " Columbian Star," the " Connecticut Mirror," and the " Ladies' Magazine." Mrs. Sarah J. Hale was then editing the magazine last named. When the publication of the " Yankee " was suspended, its subscription list was transferred to Mrs. Hale's magazine, and John Neal for a short time assisted in editing it. To illustrate the personal style of journalism in those days, N. P. Willis's editorial comment upon this arrangement may be cited. He mentioned the union of the two totally dissimilar periodicals, and added, " The mustard-pot is upset in the milk-pan."

The Haverhill " Iris," of September 29, 1832, contains a poem entitled " To a Poetical Trio in the City of Gotham," which was signed by no name, and was not known to be Whittier's until since his death. But among his papers was found a letter, written many years after the publication of this poem, by one of the " Trio " satirized in it, which fixes its authorship, even if the internal evidence were not convincing. It is an appeal to Bryant, Leggett, and Lawson, well-known poets of that day, and at the same time editors of leading Jack

son papers in New York city, to give up their partisan work, and come out for Freedom, as Moore, Campbell, and Bulwer were doing in Great Britain. Here is the poem in full, with the notes that accompanied it: —

TO A POETICAL TRIO IN THE CITY OF GOTHAM.

Three wise men of Gotham
Went to sea in a bowl.

Bards of the island city! — where of old
The Dutchman smoked beneath his favorite tree,
And the wild eyes of Indian hunters rolled
On Hudson plunging in the Tappaan Zee,
Scene of Stuyvesant's might and chivalry,
And Knickerbocker's fame, — I have made bold
To come before ye, at the present time,
And *reason* with ye in the way of *rhyme*.

Time was when poets kept the quiet tenor
Of their green pathway through th' Arcadian vale, —
Chiming their music in the low sweet manner
Of song-birds warbling to the "Soft South" gale;
Wooing the Muse where gentle zephyrs fan her,
Where all is peace and earth may not assail;
Telling of lutes and flowers, of love and fear,
Of shepherds, sheep and lambs, and "such small deer."

But ye! lost recreants — straying from the green
And pleasant vista of your early time,
With broken lutes and crownless skulls — are seen
Spattering your neighbors with abhorrent slime
Of the low world's pollution![1] Ye have been
So long apostates from the Heaven of rhyme,
That of the Muses, every mother's daughter
Blushes to own such graceless bards e'er sought her.

"*Hurrah for Jackson!*" is the music now
Which your cracked lutes have learned alone to utter,

[1] Editors of the *Mercantile Advertiser* and the *Evening Post* in New York, — the present organs of Jacksonism.

As, crouching in Corruption's shadow low,
Ye daily sweep them for your bread and butter,[1]
Cheered by the applauses of the friends who show
Their heads above the offal of the gutter,
And, like the trees which Orpheus moved at will,
Reel, as in token of your matchless skill!

Thou son of Scotia![2] — nursed beside the grave
Of the proud peasant-minstrel, and to whom
The wild muse of thy mountain-dwelling gave
A portion of its spirit, — if the tomb
Could burst its silence, o'er the Atlantic's wave,
To thee his voice of stern rebuke would come,
Who dared to waken with a master's hand
The lyre of freedom in a fettered land.

And thou! — once treading firmly the proud deck
O'er which thy country's honored flag was sleeping,
Calmly in peace, or to the hostile beck
Of coming foes in starry splendor sweeping, —
Thy graphic tales of battle or of wreck,
Or lone night-watch in middle ocean keeping,
Have made thy "Leisure Hours" more prized by far
Than those now spent in Party's wordy war.[3]

And last, not least, thou! — now nurtured in the land
Where thy bold-hearted fathers long ago
Rocked Freedom's cradle, till its infant hand
Strangled the serpent fierceness of its foe, —

[1] Perhaps, after all, they get something better; inasmuch as the Heroites have for some time had exclusive possession of the Hall of St. Tammany, and we have the authority of Halleck that

> "There 's a barrel of porter in Tammany Hall,
> And the Bucktails are swigging it all the night long."

[2] James Lawson, Esq., of the *Mercantile*. A fine, warm-hearted Scotchman, who, having unfortunately blundered into Jacksonism, is wondering "how i' the Deil's name" he got there. He is the author of a volume entitled *Tales and Sketches*, and of the tragedy of *Giordano*.

[3] William Leggett, Esq., of the *Post*, a gentleman of good talents, favorably known as the editor of the *New York Critic*, etc.

Thou, whose clear brow in early time was fanned
By the soft airs which from Castalia flow! [1] —
Where art thou now? feeding with hickory ladle
The curs of Faction with thy daily twaddle!

Men have looked up to thee, as one to be
A portion of our glory; and the light
And fairy hands of woman beckoned thee
On to thy laurel guerdon; and those bright
And gifted spirits, whom the broad blue sea
Hath shut from thy communion, bid thee, "*Write*,"
Like John of Patmos. Is all this forgotten,
For Yankee brawls and Carolina cotton?

Are autumn's rainbow hues no longer seen?
Flows the "Green River" through its vale no more?
Steals not thy "Rivulet" by its banks of green?
Wheels upward from its dark and sedgy shore
Thy "Water Fowl" no longer? — that the mean
And vulgar strife, the ranting and the *roar*
Extempore, like Bottom's, should be thine, —
Thou feeblest truck-horse in the Hero's line!

Lost trio! — turn ye to the minstrel pride
Of classic Britain. Even effeminate Moore
Has cast the wine-cup and the lute aside
For Erin and O'Connell; and before
His country's altar, Bulwer breasts the tide
Of old oppression. Sadly brooding o'er
The fate of heroes struggling to be free,
Even Campbell speaks for Poland. *Where are ye?*

Hirelings of traitors! — know ye not that men
Are rousing up around ye to retrieve
Our country's honor, which too long has been
Debased by those for whom ye daily weave
Your web of fustian; that from tongue and pen
Of those who o'er our tarnished honor grieve,
Of the pure-hearted and the gifted, come
Hourly the tokens of your master's doom?

[1] William C. Bryant, Esq., well known to the public at large as a poet of acknowledged excellence; and as a very dull editor to the people of New York.

Turn from their ruin! Dash your chains aside!
Stand up like men for Liberty and Law,
And free opinion. Check Corruption's pride,
Soothe the loud storm of fratricidal war, —
And the bright honors of your eventide
Shall share the glory which your morning saw;
The patriot's heart shall gladden at your name,
Ye shall be blessed with, and not "damned to fame"!

Both Bryant and Leggett, in a few years, became champions of freedom, to the great delight of Whittier, who wrote not only a spirited poetical tribute to Leggett, when "St. Tammany" proposed to build a monument to the man whom living they persecuted, but a brilliant eulogy in prose of one who gave up a splendid prospect of political preferment rather than forswear his allegiance to the despised cause of abolitionism. The poem, "Bryant on his Birthday," gives Whittier's later estimate of his older brother in poetry. Lawson [1] was the only one of the "Poetical Trio" who did not take part in anti-slavery work; but that the Scotchman retained his personal friendship for Whittier is shown by a letter written by him thirty-six years after the publication of the sharp satire given above. But for this letter, found among the papers of Mr. Whittier, no one would have guessed that it was the Haverhill poet who had taken these three stalwart New Yorkers over his knee. The

[1] James Lawson, born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1799. Resided in New York city and in Yonkers, after 1815. Published *Tales and Sketches, by a Cosmopolite*, in 1830, and, at various times, *Giordano*, a tragedy, and many fugitive prose and poetical articles in periodicals. Allibone says he was one of the first to introduce American letters to the notice of British readers. He retired from active literary work in 1833.

poem does not appear to have been copied in the papers of the day, and is now reproduced for the first time.

Other articles, both in prose and verse, from the pen of Whittier, may be found in files of the Haverhill "Iris" for 1832. In the number for April 12 is a prose sketch entitled "The Stormed Fort," a tale of the East Indies in the year 1766. A drunken Irish sailor captures a well-garrisoned fort, single-handed and against orders, and when threatened with punishment for his foolhardy act, vows he will never take another fort so long as he lives, which so amuses the admiral that he is let off.

From 1831 to 1835 Mr. Whittier contributed prose and verse to the "New England Magazine," edited by Joseph T. Buckingham, afterwards editor of the "Boston Courier." It was in this magazine that "Mogg Megone" first appeared, and eight shorter poems, including "Toussaint L'Ouverture," "The French Martyr," "A Lament," "Song of the Vermonters," and "The Demon of the Study." His prose contributions to this monthly included "The Opium Eater," "Passaconaway," and "Powow Hill." This last named hill is now known as Po Hill, an abbreviation of its original name; the river which flows at its base is still called the Powow. The legend opens with the following description of the hill, and account of the origin of its name: —

"On the border of the Merrimac, some eight or ten miles from the ocean, there rises a steep eminence called Powow Hill. It is a landmark to the skippers of the coasting craft that sail up Newburyport

harbor, and strikes the eye by its abrupt elevation and orbicular shape, the outlines being as regular as if struck off by the sweep of a compass. It obtained its name from that pagan ceremonial of the aborigines; for in ancient times, ere our worthy and pious ancestors routed these heathen from the land, the hill in question was the grand high place of Indian worship, and the nocturnal powows upon its summit were the terror and abomination of the whole neighborhood. While the savages lingered in these parts they never failed annually to assemble on this consecrated mount and practice their mysterious orgies, greatly to the scandal and annoyance of all the Christian folk that dwelt round about, they having a pious horror of the practice of powowing, deemed by Cotton Mather as damnable and demoniacal. Even when the last of the red men had disappeared from the country, the scene of their mystic incantations continued to be regarded with profound awe. A spirit of the pagan mysteries dwelt about the spot. Strange sights were seen. A marvelous legend was current."

The legend as told by Whittier is of a bewitched Yankee who was taken by his runaway horse to the top of the hill, into the midst of a spectral powow of savage ghosts. It is one of a large number of sketches written by Whittier between the years 1829 and 1833, which he did not care to have reproduced in any collection of his works.

As intimated, and as the letters already printed plainly show, Whittier's interest was divided between literature and politics; and how strongly the latter absorbed his attention may be most clearly

seen by the manner in which it forces itself into a letter to Mrs. Sigourney, who naturally would be his literary rather than his political confidante. The letter was written in January, 1833.

"I have often feared, and perhaps not without reason, that those whom I most truly love and esteem, and whose good opinion I value above all other human considerations, are sometimes inclined to doubt the sincerity of my friendship and the warmth of my heart. In my personal intercourse with them a boyish diffidence, which manhood has not been able to forget, and a most unpardonable lack of *words*, — a want of the ready coin, — the circulating medium of conversation, — have, I am well aware, too often made me appear cold, distant, and as incapable of appreciating the delicate attentions and generous sympathies of friendship as of returning them. And, in my epistolary correspondence, my habit of procrastination — perpetually resolving to do *to-morrow* what should be done *to-day* — has made me liable to the charge of neglecting my friends. But if I know my own heart (and I have long been in the habit of turning a severe eye upon myself, and closely analyzing my own feelings), I am *incapable* of willfully neglecting any one who feels an interest in my welfare, and, however unfortunate I may be in their expression, however ambiguous and contradictory may seem their revelation to others, I have warm and deep and kind feelings. I believe there is not a particle of misanthropy in my disposition ; and I am more at peace with the whole world than with myself, not *that I and myself* are

much in the habit of quarreling. But, I believe in the holy realities of friendship, — pure, lofty, intellectual; a communion of kindred affinities, of mental similitudes, — a redemption from the miserable fetters of human selfishness; a practical obedience to the beautiful injunction of our Common Friend, 'Love thy neighbor as thyself.' I believe, too, that the pure love which we feel for our friends is a part and portion of that love which we owe and offer to our Creator, and is acceptable to Him, inasmuch as it is offered not to the decaying elements of humanity, but to those brighter and holier attributes which are of themselves the emanations of the Divinity, — to those pure emotions of the heart and those high capacities of the soul in which that Divinity is most clearly manifested; and that, in proportion as we draw near to each other in the holy communion and unforbidden love of earthly friendship, we lessen the distance between our spirits and their Original Source, — just as the radii of a circle in approaching each other approach also their common centre.

"I hope, my dear Mrs. S., you will not attribute my neglect to answer your letter, and to acknowledge my obligations for the beautiful notice of Brainard, to anything like disregard on my part. All my friends are complaining of me for not answering their letters. Continued ill health and natural indolence, and the daily duties of a large farm, *must* be my excuse. Of poetry I have nearly taken my leave, and a pen is getting to be something of a stranger to me. I have been

compelled again to plunge into the political whirlpool; for I have found that my political reputation is more influential than my poetical: so I try to make myself a man of the world — and the public are deceived, but *I* am not. They do not see that I have thrown the rough armor of rude and turbulent controversy over a keenly sensitive bosom, — a heart of softer and gentler emotions than I dare expose. Accordingly, as Governor Hamilton, of South Carolina, says, I have 'put on athletic habits for the occasion.'

"And speaking of South Carolina, what think you of the prospect in the political heavens? To me, all is dark and fearful. If the Protecting System is abolished, New England must suffer deeply and wrongfully; and if, on the other hand, the bloodthirsty old man at the head of our government shall undertake to put down South Carolina with the bayonet, from that moment our Union will be broken up — never to unite again. Blood cannot cement it. For one, I thank God that He has given me a deep and invincible horror of human butchery, — that I am not one of those who 'look on blood and carnage with composure.' When Paine put forth his strong, and at that time, at least, well-directed, energies in favor of sparing the life of Louis XVI. before the French Convention, Marat fiercely denounced him as 'a Quaker, destitute of that philosophic liberality requisite for putting men to death.' I meet with a great many Marats at the present day.

"I have occasionally seen an article of your poetry during the last year. I wish you would take the

trouble to send me, if convenient, such new pieces as you may publish. I have written two or three prose articles for 'Buckingham's Magazine.' Have you seen the 'Knickerbocker,' published by Peabody & Cole, of New York? I don't think much of No. 1. There is not an article of poetry in it which *you* would think paid the trouble of reading. Halleck, Irving, Paulding, Hoffman, and Bryant are engaged in it, I understand. I have been requested to write for it, but don't know as I shall be able to. I am glad to see that the 'Bouquet' still continues; 't is the last light in your benighted literary horizon. Hartford is by no means a literary place, and it has been remarked that were it not for yourself it would be only known as the place where a certain Convention once assembled. Have you seen Garrison's 'Thoughts on Colonization'? I wish you would read that book. I know your predilection for the Colonization Society, but I regret it.

"This letter will be handed you by Mr. Law, with whom I occasionally correspond. Is Mr. Stamiatiades with you now? If so, remember me kindly to him, and assure him of my best wishes; and, for yourself, let me assure you that your letters, whether frequent or far between, are to me as *angel visits*."

The following letter to Jonathan Law, written on the 13th of September, 1832, gives a further glimpse of his life on the farm, while relieved of editorial work, and shows how the Asiatic cholera, which was then spreading over New England, affected the public mind: —

"I have not forgotten my kind friends at Hartford. Whatever may be my faults, I trust ingratitude is not among their number. I already owe you and your family more than I shall ever suitably repay. But if my life and health are spared me, you may always rely upon me as a firm, and I hope not altogether useless, friend. My health has been bad, nay, is so at this moment, but I have still tolerable courage, and I am able to see to the affairs of the farm. I am happy to find that your city continues healthy. We have had only one case [of cholera] in our village, and the patient is now nearly recovered. The disease has at last broken out in Boston; five fatal cases have occurred within the last day or two. For my own part, I felt extremely nervous about the cholera when it broke out in Montreal and Quebec; but it has now come to our doors, and familiarity softens its terrors. It is a singular fact in the philosophy of the human mind that in proportion as the dangers which we most fear at a distance gather closer around us, we become reckless, hardened, and secure. I have vainly tried to analyze my own feelings in this matter. . . . I send you a copy or two of the 'Essex Gazette,' containing two numbers of a series of articles upon that scandalous veto of Amos Kendall's. I have written nothing of late save local political paragraphs, with the single exception of a piece published in the Haverhill 'Iris,' which you probably noticed, headed 'Stanzas,' and prefaced by two extracts from the speeches of Henry Clay. . . . Do you often see our mutual friend, Mrs. Sigourney? I

think highly of that woman, — she has fine talents, and they are all devoted to the best of causes.

"If I recollect aright, in your last letter you spoke despairingly of a matter connected with the elevation of Mr. Clay to the Presidency. [Mr. Law had been postmaster of Hartford, but was displaced by Jackson. Probably he had expressed the opinion that Clay, if elected, would not replace him.] I do not view the matter as you do. I believe that justice will be done if that desirable event takes place. I see no reason now for despairing of Mr. Clay's election. New York is lost, and so is Kentucky, and so is Pennsylvania to the Jackson cause. If Henry Clay is elected, all will be well. Restoration must follow as a necessary consequence of our abhorrence of proscription for opinion's sake. . . . I know not when I shall be in Hartford again; even if my health was restored I should not leave this place. I have too many friends around me, and my prospects are too good to be sacrificed for any uncertainty. I have done with poetry and literature. I can *live* as a farmer, and that is all I ask at present. I wish you could make me a visit, you and Mrs. Law; our situation is romantic enough, — out of the din and bustle of the village, with a long range of green hills stretching away to the river; a brook goes brawling at their foot, overshadowed with trees, through which the white walls of our house are just visible. In truth, I am as comfortable as one can well be, always excepting ill health."

There are other letters of this period which show that it was political and not literary ambition

that was animating him in the years immediately preceding his consecration to the cause of the oppressed. When he speaks of his prospects being "too good to be sacrificed for any uncertainty," his meaning is that he is aware of his political popularity in his district. At about the time when this letter was written, he was considering a proposition made by his friends that he should become a candidate for Congress. All that prevented his doing so was the fact that he was not yet quite twenty-five years old, and therefore, as he supposed, barred out by a provision of the Constitution.

CHAPTER IV.

ENLISTMENT IN THE WAR AGAINST SLAVERY.

1832–1837.

Up to 1832, when he returned from Hartford to his home in Haverhill, Mr. Whittier's highest ambition, as we have seen, had been to make his mark in politics. To be sure, he had written, in about three years, more than a hundred poems, counting only those that were published. He must have taken some pride in seeing his verses widely copied, and in the reputation as a rising poet that was accorded him by some of the best writers of his time. But poetry was praised and not paid for in those days, and literature offered no alluring prizes to American youth. The academies and colleges were turning out a mob of amateur rhymesters. Theological students were intent upon giving a new twist to the Psalms of David. Young doctors and lawyers were translating the Odes of Horace while waiting for patients and clients. Even Daniel Webster, in his ponderous way, dallied with the Muses, and John Quincy Adams, the busiest man of his day, spent hours in fashioning rhymed lines for albums. Scarcely a professional man of that generation was so utterly prosaic as to escape the infection. The field was certainly not an encouraging one for a poet who should de-

pend upon his verses for a living. Mr. Whittier had tried his wings in the gusty air of politics and found they would bear him, and it was in this direction that he was looking for his life work. While managing his farm, he kept up his contributions to political papers, and took an active part in the politics of his native town, and of Essex County.

Caleb Cushing, of Newburyport, had just returned from Europe, and was beginning to feel the stirrings of political ambition. Young Whittier helped him to secure a seat in Congress, and Cushing, who was seven years his senior, encouraged his aspirations to political preferment. For a time, all his impulses were in that direction. His work as a political editor had brought him in contact with the leaders of his party, and his marked ability as a writer and his honesty and sagacity in the party councils were appreciated. He was becoming known as an anti-slavery man, it is true, but that did not then disqualify one for leadership in either party, in New England. Besides, his Quakerism was a good excuse for his conscience. Our orthodox fathers in that generation were taking more kindly to Quakers than to heretics in other sects, like Unitarians and Universalists, and were ready to humor what were regarded as their whims. So that up to 1833, when Whittier was in the twenty-sixth year of his age, whatever thought he had for the future, outside of his work as a farmer, was in the direction of politics. In 1833, his attention had been called by Garrison, of whom he had seen little for the

past three years,[1] to the importance of arousing the nation to a sense of its guilt in the matter of slavery. He did not need any change of heart to become an abolitionist. As a birthright Quaker he inherited the traditions of his sect against the institution of slavery. But he had been hoping by moral means, and by efforts within the lines of the old parties, to secure the gradual extinction of a system so out of harmony with our otherwise free institutions. A word from Garrison caused him thoroughly to study the situation. All the literature of the subject within his reach was examined carefully. Among the Southern newspapers to which he had access he found evidence that whatever thought of extinguishing slavery had animated the fathers of the republic, and prompted the anti-slavery utterances of Washington and Jefferson, no such idea was now entertained by any of the Southern people. The demand for slave labor in the rice swamps and cotton fields of the extreme South had made the raising of slaves profitable in Virginia, and in other States in which hitherto the "institution" had seemed doomed to extinction as an economic mistake. He found, too, that both the great parties of the North were beginning to discipline their members who were too urgent in pressing measures that might lose to them the support of the Southern States. He had learned something of this change in the popular

[1] It is to be noted that in November, 1831, he published in the Haverhill *Gazette* his poem, "To William Lloyd Garrison," which now introduces the section *Anti-Slavery Poems* in his collected works.

feeling from the experience of his friend Garrison, who had been imprisoned at Baltimore for his free utterance of anti-slavery sentiments. This incident occurred at about the time when Whittier took the editorship of the "New England Review," in 1830. In January, 1831, Garrison began the publication of the "Liberator," in Boston. He uttered his memorable ultimatum: "I am in earnest, I will not equivocate, I will not excuse, I will not retreat a single inch, and I will be heard." Whittier counted the cost with Quaker coolness of judgment before taking a step that closed to him the gates of both political and literary preferment. He realized more fully than did most of the early abolitionists that the institution of slavery would not fall at the first blast of their horns. When he decided to enter upon this contest, he understood that his cherished ambitions must be laid aside, and that an entire change in his plans was involved. He took the step deliberately and after serious consideration.

In later life, in giving counsel to a boy of fifteen, Mr. Whittier said that his own early ambition had been to become a prominent politician, and from this ideal he was persuaded only by the earnest appeals of his friends. Taking their advice, he united with the persecuted and obscure band of abolitionists, and to this course he attributed all his after success in life. Then, turning to the boy, he placed his hand on his head, and said in his gentle voice: "My lad, if thou wouldst win success, join thyself to some unpopular but noble cause."

In the spring of 1833, while caring for his farm, and doing some literary work for the Haverhill "Gazette" and other journals, he wrote the pamphlet entitled "Justice and Expediency," and published it at his own expense. It must have cost him a good part of his year's earnings, beside the time spent in examining the many authorities he cites. It is an argument to prove the expediency of being just. The injustice of slavery is shown with much warm rhetoric. The entire literature of the subject had evidently been carefully studied. Every statement is backed up by quotations from unquestioned authority, and by references in footnotes. Probably no single anti-slavery paper ever published covered the ground so completely as this. It is thorough in statement, carefully reasoned, and enforced by direct appeals to the conscience and the heart of the nation. Many good men, both at the North and at the South, had satisfied their consciences by promoting the scheme of the African Colonization Society. A few slaveholders had freed their slaves, and many thousands of dollars had been spent in colonizing them in Liberia. With these freed slaves had been sent a large number of negroes who had never been slaves. Henry Clay was the President of the Colonization Society, a position he had held for twenty years, and thereafter until his death. The political party with which Whittier had acted numbered among its leaders many active promoters of the colonization scheme. Collections for it were taken up regularly in the churches. To denounce this society,

as not a help, but a great hindrance to the cause of the blacks, was therefore a bold act for a young man who had been looking forward to a life in politics. The pamphlet gives six reasons why the Colonization Society was unworthy of support, and fortifies them by citations from the official papers of the society. It points out the ludicrous inconsistency of the advocates of colonization, who in one breath say with Henry Clay, "Each emigrant is a missionary, carrying with him the holy cause of civilization, religion, and free institutions;" and in the next breath say, with the official organ of the society, "Free blacks are a greater nuisance than even slaves themselves." It shows that the only adequate remedy for slavery is abolition. The pamphlet is published in full in the prose works of Mr. Whittier.[1]

It attracted immediate attention, and the edition he had issued was soon exhausted. Lewis Tappan, of New York, caused it to be printed in the monthly organ of the American Anti-Slavery Society, and paid for issuing an extra edition of 5000 copies. Moses Brown, of Providence, an aged and wealthy Quaker philanthropist, had influence enough to procure its publication in the Providence "Journal," although the conductor of that paper had no sympathy with its tone. Some idea of the temper with which this pamphlet was received at the South is shown by the fact that, for lending to a brother doctor this pamphlet of Mr. Whittier's, Dr. Reuben Crandall, of Washington,

[1] Riverside edition, vol. vii.

was in 1834 arrested, and confined in the old city prison, until his health was destroyed, and he was liberated only to die. This incident is referred to in the poem "Astræa at the Capitol:" —

> "Beside me gloomed the prison cell
> Where wasted one in slow decline
> For uttering simple words of mine,
> And loving freedom all too well."

At the time when Mr. Whittier was writing this pamphlet, he was not calculating upon the far-reaching effect it might have upon his own fortunes. It did not occur to him until his manuscript was ready for publication that it would seriously interfere with his political ambitions. He was all that summer actively helping the canvass of Caleb Cushing, writing spirited communications to the "Iris" over various signatures, and sending them with private notes of political advice to Editor Harriman.[1]

His letters to Cushing and other political associates at this time are also full of enthusiasm for his party. But as he was about to issue his pamphlet, a prophetic glimpse of its real effect came to him, and it caused him sleepless nights. A decision to follow the path of duty at all hazards ended the struggle, and the decision was never regretted,

[1] As a specimen of the style of these notes, take this, dated at his farm, "5th mo. 15, 1833:" "Fullington, at the Rocks, says there is no chance for Cushing, and thinks it would be better to take a Cushing man from Lowell. I don't see the use of this; you can do nothing with the Lowell folk; choose a man there for *this* Congress, and he will stand for the *next*. If Osgood [the Jackson candidate] is elected, National Republicanism in this district will go to its long home."

although it crowded his life with hardships for many years, and ended all his dreams of political preferment. He announced to Caleb Cushing his intention to publish "Justice and Expediency," in the following letter, dated "5th mo., 1833." After urging his friend not to decline the candidacy, even if the next ballot should go against him, and prophesying ultimate election, he says: —

"About a fortnight ago, I took up a pamphlet containing your remarks at the colonization meeting in Boston. In that frankness which accords with my ideas of doing to others as I would be done by, I cannot but say that I deeply regret this publication. So far as literary merit is concerned the speech is worthy of you, but I dissent from your opinions most radically, and so do a great majority of the people in this vicinity. I shall probably send you in a week or two a pamphlet on the subject of slavery, written hastily and under many disadvantages. Most of the facts it contains you are probably already acquainted with. There may be some, however, which have escaped your observation. I beg of you to lend your mind to the investigation of this most momentous question, believing as I do that you can do a great deal for the cause of suffering humanity. I should like to have you make this pamphlet and others recently published on the subject the basis of an article in some of our reviews or magazines. That you will differ from me I know, and shall therefore expect to be handled without gloves, but credit me, my dear sir, I had much rather fall under the *stoccado* of a gentlemanly and scientific swordsman than be

bunglingly hewed in pieces like Agag of old under the broadaxe of the Prophet. I have only time again to beg you, whatever may be the result of this trial, to allow yourself to be a candidate still. Sooner or later we must triumph.

"I am almost sorry that I troubled you in a former letter with my own private matters. But that letter was written under an exciting sense of unprovoked injury. With all my Quakerism, I cannot but sometimes give way to indignant feeling, when my best motives are tortured into evil ones."

Both Garrison and Whittier had been actively friendly to the Colonization Society up to 1830. The papers conducted by them set forth its claims, and in his Fourth of July address, delivered in Park Street Church, Boston, in 1829, Mr. Garrison made an earnest appeal for the cause. Even after his pamphlet was issued, in 1833, Whittier continued for a year working for the cause of Henry Clay, in the hope that eventually he would assume the role of the champion of freedom. But in 1834 he wrote: "We regret that truth and the cause of humanity, which he has betrayed, compel us to speak of Henry Clay as the enemy of Freedom." His last tribute to the Kentucky statesman, written in 1833, began with this stanza: —

> "The Grecian as he feeds his flocks,
> In Tempe's vale, on Morea's rocks,
> Or where the gleam of bright blue waters
> Is caught by Scio's white-armed daughters,
> While dwelling on the dubious strife
> Which ushered in his nation's life,
> Shall mingle in his grateful lay
> Bozzaris with the name of Clay."

In 1830, when Garrison was imprisoned at Baltimore, Whittier appealed to Clay for his release, and Clay, who recognized the value of Whittier's friendship, promptly responded to the appeal. But Arthur Tappan, of New York, had even more promptly paid Garrison's fine, else the young agitator would have owed his release to the Kentucky slave-owner.[1]

Among the Southern papers that took notice of Whittier's pamphlet was the Richmond "Jeffersonian," which complained that no sooner had the accursed tariff ceased to be the stone of stumbling and the rock of offense, than Northern enthusiasts began to interfere with the domestic institutions of the South. Whittier, well primed with anti-slavery quotations from Jefferson and other Virginian statesmen, made a ringing reply to the "Jeffersonian" in the "Essex Gazette," published at Haverhill. He showed that the doctrines of the men for whom their paper was named were every whit as anti-slavery as those of the enthusiasts who were accused of furnishing a sufficient reason for "poising the Ancient Dominion on its sovereignty," and rousing every slave-owner to military preparation. This reply to the "Jeffersonian" is a far more pointed paper than the original pamphlet. Like that, it is full of quotations, and abounds in footnotes, showing great research, and a special familiarity with Virginia politics, not only of that

[1] Mr. W. H. Smith, who has possession of Clay's papers, and is preparing his biography, has found a letter of Whittier's, written in 1837, earnestly urging the Kentuckian to come out as the champion of freedom; so strong still was the personal attraction which his early political idol had for him.

time but of former generations. He quotes at every turn from Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe; from Blackstone, Lafayette, and O'Connell; from the statute-books of South Carolina, and from the statistics of the census. He acknowledges they have under the Constitution the power to hold their slave property, but denies they have any moral right to take advantage of the power. New England, he says, will abide unto the death by the Constitution of the land, but she asks to be relieved of the duty of hunting down fellow-men like wild beasts, when they are struggling desperately for liberty. In attacking slavery, the abolitionists recommend no measure conflicting with the Constitution. They would not excite or encourage a rebellion among slaves. They hold such attempts in utter abhorrence, by whomsoever made. They are opposed to any political interposition of the government in regard to slavery, as it exists in the States. He goes on at some length to reiterate and emphasize this disclaimer. He says slavery has made desolate and sterile one of the loveliest regions of the whole earth, and points to the hillsides gullied and naked, the fields run over with brier and fern. Then he shows how the rocky soil of New England lies green and luxuriant beneath the sun of our brief summer. Free labor has changed a landscape wild and savage as the night scenery of Salvator Rosa into one of pastoral beauty, the abode of independence and happiness. One of the concluding paragraphs of the paper makes this reference to John Randolph, then recently deceased: —

"The late noble example of the eloquent states-

man of Roanoke, the manumission of his slaves, speaks volumes to his political friends. In the last hour of his existence, when his soul was struggling from its broken tenement, his latest effort was the confirmation of this generous act of a former period. Light rest the turf upon him, beneath his patrimonial oaks! The prayers of many hearts made happy by his benevolence shall linger over his grave, and bless it."

These letters in reply to the Richmond paper were written in July, 1833, less than one month after the death of Randolph, and published in the "Essex Gazette." The passage last quoted, as he wrote it in prose, probably awakened the inspiration of his noble poem, "Randolph of Roanoke," which was first published in the "National Era," in January, 1847, it being one of his earliest contributions to that paper when he assumed the position of corresponding editor. It had probably been lying in his portfolio for more than thirteen years. Several lines in the poem indicate that it was written not long after Randolph's death,[1] which occurred June 24, 1833.

The die was now cast. Whittier had com-

[1] The manumitted slaves of John Randolph, three hundred in number, could not be allowed to remain free in Virginia. Randolph's executor bought land, erected buildings, and made other preparations for them in Bremen, Mercer County, Ohio, at an expense of over $30,000. But when it came to settling them on the new purchase, the people of the vicinity, including the very men who sold the land and had the money in their pockets, raised a mob, and insisted on driving them back into Virginia. A bond had to be given that the negroes should not become paupers, before they were allowed to remain upon the land purchased for them.

mitted himself to a cause he was sagacious enough to see was not to be a winning one for a long series of years. He had sacrificed to it the ambitions of his young manhood, and knew as a poet and editor he had lost all chance of gaining the position to which he had been aspiring. Now came years in which he felt the pinch of poverty, as he had not before experienced it. The poems that were arousing the conscience of the nation brought him no income. His mother and sister heartily approved his course, and aided him in maintaining it. Strict economy enabled him to keep out of debt, meagre as were the supplies from such editorial and book-keeping work as he found to do. His pen was kept busy in advocating the cause he had espoused, and the poems known as the "Voices of Freedom" came rapidly one after another, — hammer strokes against flinty prejudice. Sparks followed each blow. Those who are old enough remember how these spirited verses stirred and warmed the young hearts of the North, and prepared the soil from which sprang the great political party which took from him the watchword, "Justice the highest expediency."

There was a sudden, even startling change in the character of Whittier's poetry, when he made up his mind to champion the cause of the slave. The hundreds of poems he had written previous to 1833 were mere exercises in rhetoric and versification; they had none of the vivifying spirit which breathes in all he wrote after he consecrated himself to the holy cause of liberty. Whittier himself was always ashamed of his early literary work,

both prose and verse, and little of it was with his consent saved from oblivion. And yet, as we have seen, these early writings gave him a literary reputation which would have been highly valued by any other author of that time. They were widely copied in the newspapers of the land. It is in accordance with the wish of Mr. Whittier that his biographer, who has before him great numbers of these early and forgotten poems, decides to bring to light only the few verses to be found in preceding pages, to show their quality, and to indicate the remarkable change to which reference has been made. When this change came, as has been said of him by another, "he became the Voice for which a few had been wearily waiting, yet which exasperated and terrified the whole country. To these few, therefore, Whittier at once became a prophet; to the many, an object of detestation." His first years of literary work had given him a reputation at once general and flattering, which was thrown aside without regret when the voice which called him to higher duty was heard.

Early in November, 1833, Mr. Garrison wrote to Whittier, asking him to go as one of the delegates from Massachusetts to the National Anti-Slavery Convention, to be held in Philadelphia in December. In answer to this call, he wrote to Garrison from Haverhill, November 11, 1833: —

"I long to go to Philadelphia, to urge upon the members of my religious Society the duty of putting their shoulders to the work, to make their solemn testimony against slavery visible over the whole land; to urge them by the holy memories

of Woolman, and Benezet, and Tyson, to come up as of old to the standard of Divine Truth, though even the fires of another persecution should blaze around them. But the expenses of the journey will, I fear, be too much for me, as thee knows our farming business does not put much cash in our pockets. I am, however, greatly obliged to the Boston Young Men's Association for selecting me as one of their delegates. I do not know how it may be, — but whether I go or not, my best wishes and my warmest sympathies are with the friends of emancipation. Some of my political friends are opposed to my anti-slavery sentiments, and perhaps it was in some degree owing to this that, at the late convention for the nomination of Senators for Essex, my nomination was lost by one vote. I should have rejoiced to have had an opportunity to coöperate personally with the abolitionists of Boston. . . . Can thee not find time for a visit to Haverhill before thee goes on to Philadelphia? I wish I was certain of going with thee. At all events, *do* write immediately on receiving this, and tell me when thee shall start for the Quaker City."

The pecuniary difficulty was removed by the generosity of Samuel E. Sewall, one of the earliest and most efficient supporters of the cause of emancipation. The journey to Philadelphia was mostly by stagecoach. Mr. Whittier, the youngest delegate to the convention, was accompanied by other members from New England, including William Lloyd Garrison, Joshua Coffin, Arnold Buffum, and eight others from Massachusetts, and Rev.

David Thurston, of Winthrop, Maine, the oldest delegate in the convention. Mr. Whittier was appointed one of the secretaries, and he was also on the committee, of which Garrison was chairman, that drafted the memorable "Declaration of Sentiments."

Professor Elizur Wright, Jr., was associated with Whittier as one of the secretaries of the Philadelphia convention, and upon the organization of the American Anti-Slavery Society, he became corresponding secretary, with an office at 150 Nassau Street, New York. One of his first duties was to give notice to Mr. Whittier that he had been appointed an agent of the society. To this notification Whittier made a reply which so fully explains his situation at this time, that it is here given. It is interesting to note that the methods he advises for furthering the cause are precisely those to which he adhered during the whole campaign against slavery. His rejoicing over the collapse of the Colonization Society was premature. This "Babel of Prejudice and Oppression" survived for a few years its apparent bankruptcy at the time this letter was written. It was dated "Haverhill, 25th of 2d mo. [1834]."

My dear Friend, — I ought before this to have acknowledged the receipt of a document from thee, appointing me an agent for the American Anti-Slavery Society. I am most grateful for this mark of confidence, although I needed no incentive in this glorious cause. . . .

Certainly the friends of suffering humanity have

reason to rejoice that the builders of the Babel of Prejudice and Oppression have been confounded. In the words of Sheridan on another occasion, "Each clamors to be heard in his own barbarous language — each thwarts and reproaches the other, and even while their full rage assails with common hate the peace and virtue of the world, the civil war in their own tumultuous legions defeats the purpose of the foul conspiracy." The days of the American Colonization Society are numbered . . . .

Situated as I am, I can at present do but little. I cannot as yet accuse myself of neglecting any opportunity for the dissemination of truth on the great subject of Slavery. The clergy in this vicinity are rapidly taking sides with us. There is another class which might, I think, be easily moved. I allude to that class of politicians or civilians whose sphere of influence is limited to their town or county. These can take hold of our cause without essentially endangering their popularity, and through them the higher classes of our statesmen may be reached. I have some influence with this class. My exertions as a political writer for the last four years have gained me a large number of political friends. The columns of all the leading newspapers are open to me. With many of the editors I am on terms of intimate personal acquaintance. All know me as a quondam brother — as a political friend or opponent. Now, if I were at leisure to reply to such misrepresentations and charges as occasionally appear in their papers — to distribute pamphlets and papers — to visit personally gentlemen in my vicinity and engage their

coöperation — and finally to combine the Anti-Slavery feeling upon some definite and practical object — such, for instance, as the election of members of the state legislature, who will bring forward and sustain resolutions instructing our congressional delegation to urge the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, — I have no doubt I could do good and efficient service.

But I have really little leisure for such exertions. In the first place, my brother and myself are almost constantly engaged in the affairs of our small farm, which does not yield profit enough to enable us to hire labor; and I am obliged to occupy my evenings and other leisure time in writing occasional literary articles for the "New England Magazine," for which I am paid. . . .

Now, if the Executive Committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society could assure me for the term of six months the sum of $150, I should be able to bend all the energies which God has given me to the great work before us; and I fully believe that at the end of that time we shall be able to lend both moral and pecuniary strength to the National Society. I have specified that sum as the smallest which could possibly meet my expenses, as I should be compelled to travel considerably from home, and owing to the consequent interruption of my labor on the farm, I should be under the necessity of hiring a person to supply my place.

Counsel me, my dear brother. Let me hear from thee soon. If in the present state of the Society's funds, the sum I have named cannot be spared — or if it be urgently demanded in any

other direction, believe me, I shall most cheerfully acquiesce in the necessity, and lose no opportunity of advocating to the extent of my ability the cause of Truth and Humanity.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

P. S. Who is the writer of that "colonization sermon"? 'T is excellent. The text (Gen. 37) is exactly appropriate.

It would appear that his proposition was accepted and he at once entered upon his duties as agent of the society. The sermon referred to in the postscript was probably a satirical essay, founded on the story of Joseph's brethren who sent him to Africa to get rid of him, in which case the text would be indeed "exactly appropriate." The sphere of his activity as agent of the society was at first confined to his county, but was widened the next year, when he became a member of the legislature, and still further extended three years later, when he was connected with the central office in New York.

In March, 1834, Mr. Whittier wrote the following letter to Rev. Dr. William Ellery Channing, hoping to induce this eminent divine to lend the cause of immediate emancipation the weight of his great influence. This letter was written from Haverhill, on the 24th of 3d month, 1834. He said: —

"A recent perusal of thy sermons published in 1832, by Bowen, has induced me, although a stranger, to address thee. . . . My attention has been particularly directed to the sentiment expressed in the sermons above mentioned in pages 153, 162, 165, 166. To my mind the elevated sentiment of

these passages has a direct bearing upon a great question now agitating the community, — I allude to the slavery question, — the doctrine of immediate emancipation. I am but an humble individual, and were my subject less important I should not seek with my feeble voice the ear of one whose name and fame have no narrower limits than those of Christianity itself; but I cannot forbear expressing to thee my heartfelt desire, my earnest hope, that these great powers of intellect with which a merciful God has favored thee may be exerted at this crisis in the great cause of emancipation. I cannot doubt thy sentiments on this subject; may I beg of thee to openly coöperate with that great and deserved influence which Providence has allotted to thy profession, with those who are now striving in this cause, 'to break every chain of selfishness, to enlarge and invigorate the kind affections, to identify themselves with other beings, to sympathize not with a few, but with all the living and rational creatures of God.' [An extract from Channing's writings.] So shall the blessings of many who are ready to perish come upon thee. The deep interest which I feel in this great point of Christian duty must be my apology for this abrupt epistle."

We now come to the period when Mr. Whittier was to experience some of the difficulties attending the warm advocacy of an unpopular cause. Mr. Garrison began the publication of the "Liberator" in January, 1831. He had previously, at Baltimore and Bennington, Vt., shown his strong purpose to fight the institution of slavery to the death.

At first, he had sympathy and help from all classes of people at the North. The colonization scheme had for some time been looked upon with favor by philanthropists, at the South as well as at the North; but, as it afterward appeared, for widely different reasons. At the North it was looked upon as a means of gradually extinguishing slavery, by removing the negroes to Africa. At the South, there was less and less purpose to do away with the institution, either gradually or at all. It was just beginning to be profitable. Colonization meant to the slaveholders a way of disposing of the free people of color, who made the slaves uneasy, and occasionally helped them to escape, while at the North, the Colonization Society was generally regarded as engaged in a worthy mission of Christian philanthropy — indeed as a branch of the foreign mission work. For would not the Christianized negroes carry to benighted Africa the religion and the civilization they had acquired during their stay with us?

It was when Garrison began to denounce the Colonization Society as "the handmaid of slavery" that he stirred up a tempest among the churches. For a long series of years they had been taking up collections for this handmaid of the missions, as they had regarded it. The call for immediate emancipation had not given much offense among the churches outside the commercial cities, as slavery was universally considered at the North an evil to be done away with at some time, and the general feeling was, the sooner the better.

All over the North, it was for a time an easy

matter to organize an anti-slavery society. Hundreds of them were at work upon public sentiment in New England, and every town in some parts of Ohio had such societies, and they were approved by all the churches. There was comparatively little objection (except in the cities) to the word "immediate," which was insisted upon by Garrison. But many prominent clergymen, statesmen, and merchants, who were identified with the colonization movement, were angered at once when their pet philanthropy was denounced as a bulwark of slavery. Whittier's pamphlet and his replies to the Virginia editors had strongly reinforced the position taken by Garrison.

The mobs that for a series of years disgraced the cities of New England had their origin partly in the feeling that the abolitionists were in conflict with the churches, and partly in the fear of business men that our commercial relations with the South were imperiled by the agitation. The dirty work of these riots was done by men who had no care about the principle involved, but who saw that they had license for rough sport and even violence, and that they would not be interfered with by the classes which usually insisted upon order.

When Garrison was in England, in 1833, he invited George Thompson to visit this country, and deliver anti-slavery addresses. Thompson was one of the most eloquent of the English reformers who had secured the abolition of slavery in all the British colonies. He came to America in September, 1834, and wherever he appeared

was at first well received. Garrison says of him that he was a young man of thirty, tall, graceful, and with a sweet voice. "As an orator," he adds, "he surpasses any speaker I have ever heard." He was prudent enough at the start not to attempt addressing audiences in New York or Boston. He spoke at several small places in Massachusetts, where his eloquence was greatly admired. He went to Maine, and was well received in Portland and Brunswick, but met his first demonstration of violence at Augusta, where his windows were broken.

At length, the word seems to have been passed over the whole country that he was a "British emissary," who had come to make trouble between North and South, and cause a disruption of our Union, for the benefit of the manufacturers and merchants of England. The jealousy of our mother country was intense at that time, and it was easy to stir the passions of the populace against an Englishman. Thompson's life was thereafter often endangered, but when driven out of one city he appeared in another, with the unwelcome message he was bravely determined to deliver.

This was the condition of things when Mr. Whittier was entering upon his work as an opponent of slavery and of the Colonization Society. In 1835, his native town sent him to represent her in the General Court. He had already written and published in the "Liberator" of September 13, 1834, the "Stanzas"[1] beginning with the line:

[1] This poem, originally called *Stanzas*, was afterward entitled *Follen*, and in the latest edition of Whittier's collected

"Our fellow-countrymen in chains!"

It happened to be first printed just one week before the arrival of Thompson in this country. It was a passionate outburst of indignation against the system of slavery, and it rang at once through the North. It was recited by anti-slavery orators with great effect in their meetings, and the schoolboys found it a piece suitable for declamation. The number of the "Liberator" in which this poem originally appeared has this appreciative comment upon it from the hand of Garrison: —

"Our gifted brother Whittier has again seized the great trumpet of Liberty, and blown a blast that shall ring from Maine to the Rocky Mountains."

As a member of the legislature of Massachusetts, Mr. Whittier was active and influential, though not a debater. He took especial interest in a movement to abolish the death penalty, and secured a petition of sixty-seven citizens of Haverhill, headed by his own name, for this object. He was reëlected as representative from Haverhill for the year 1836, but his physician assured him it would be unsafe for him again to undertake the work that had seriously injured him in 1835. Hon. Robert Rantoul, Jr., represented Gloucester in the Massachusetts legislature at the time when Mr. Whittier represented Haverhill. They had rooms together for a time at a boarding place in Franklin Street, by the Bulfinch urn. Their rela-

works is named *Expostulation*. Neither of these names can be regarded as adequate for such a noble outburst of hot indignation.

tions were intimate so long as Rantoul lived, and how his memory was cherished after his death is shown in several poems in which he is directly or indirectly mentioned.

It was while he was in attendance upon a special session of the legislature, October 21, 1835, that Whittier witnessed the Boston mob, led by "men of property and standing," which broke up a meeting of the Female Anti-Slavery Society, and dragged Garrison in the street, with a rope about his body. Hearing of the disturbance, while in his seat in the State House, and knowing that his sister Elizabeth was at the meeting, he hurried to the spot. In a letter written on the occasion of the semi-centennial commemoration of the affair, in 1885, he says: —

"I found the street thronged and noisy with turbulent respectability and unwashed rascality. I was anxious for my young sister, who I knew was in the women's anti-slavery meeting; but I heard that the ladies had all left and were safe. The fury of the mob seemed to be directed against George Thompson, but failing to find him, they seized upon Garrison. I heard their shout of exultation and caught a glimpse of their victim just as he was rescued and driven off to Leverett Street jail. Thither Samuel J. May and myself followed, and visited him in prison. I could sympathize with him, for only a short time before, the Concord mob, which could not get hold of Thompson, fell upon me with stones and missiles, and my escape with nothing worse than a few bruises was something to be thankful for. The rioters had just

roughly used a poor traveling Quaker preacher, quietly passing through the town, who had the misfortune of being mistaken for myself. It seemed to be a case of suffering by proxy all around. From our present standpoint we can pity and forgive the actors in those scenes."

The Concord riot, referred to by Mr. Whittier in this letter, happened September 4, 1835, and the circumstances that led to it will now be traced. An anti-slavery society was organized in Haverhill in the spring of 1834, and Mr. Whittier acted as its corresponding secretary. The speakers from other places who lectured before this society were welcome guests at the Whittier homestead in East Haverhill. On the 21st of August, 1835, George Thompson came to Haverhill to rest from the exertions incident to a series of mobs through which he had passed, and made his home with Whittier. He delivered a lecture in Haverhill which was well received. In a diary kept by Elizabeth Whittier, under date 24th of 8th month, 1835, is this entry:

"The three past days have been full of incident and excitement. Oh, we have been too proud of our country; we have been flattered, inordinately flattered, till like the self-glorying Pharisee we have thanked God we were not like other nations. America is working everlasting disgrace for her future name. The shameful record must be written down, that in this land of Bibles and law and learning and *freedom*, a minister of Christ, — a Paul in his zeal for the promotion of every cause of righteousness and truth, — a stranger, led by the holiest impulses of humanity, coming among us to

proclaim in his own wonderful and fervid eloquence the eternal principles of justice to mankind, — that such a man, with such purposes, was slandered by Americans, hated by Americans, and *mobbed* by Americans; that in Massachusetts thousands of dollars were offered for his assassination! Oh, I am sure I shall never be proud of my country. I shall much sooner be ashamed of my fatherland, while it is thus unchristianized."

Three days afterward there is a record in the diary that George Thompson had left for his home "day before yesterday." It appears that he went to Salem, and that Mr. Whittier and his mother also went to Salem, to attend a Quarterly Meeting of the Society of Friends. Among Elizabeth's papers is found a note hurriedly written by her brother, which reads as follows: —

SALEM, *5th day afternoon*,
8th mo. 27.

I write by our good friend, Thomas Spencer, to request thee to welcome brother Thompson to our house, as his friends are somewhat fearful for his personal safety at this time. Mother and myself will be at home on Seventh day, if nothing happens. In great haste,

J. G. WHITTIER.

Thompson will remain with us some days at Haverhill.

But Thompson did not arrive at East Haverhill on Friday, as was expected, and this record is found in Elizabeth's diary: —

"7*th day eve.* Never have I felt so deeply the necessity of Christian forbearance and long suffering on the part of the abolitionists as at present. . . . George Thompson was to have been in Haverhill, on his way to New Hampshire, yesterday afternoon; but he has not come. What can have detained him? I have watched very anxiously for his coming, and have been fearful that all was not well. Heaven grant it may be, and I trust it is. Sickness or something of less importance may have kept him. I wish I was good enough to pray acceptably for his and all our dear friends' safety."

Her prayers were answered promptly, for Thompson arrived safely on the evening the above entry was made in her diary. On Monday, August 31, she writes: —

"Our friends, George Thompson and Samuel J. May, came late on Seventh day eve, and their coming relieved us of much anxiety. Yesterday morning, Greenleaf left here in company with George Thompson on a short tour to New Hampshire. Yesterday afternoon S. J. May occupied the pulpit of N. Gage. He had come to Haverhill with the expectation of addressing the people on the subject of American slavery, on last evening, in the First Parish meeting-house. But for reasons best known to themselves the gentlemen comprising the committee saw fit to refuse the house, and the Christian church was obtained; the house was filled to overflowing; at half past seven the lecturer arose, and in his peculiarly winning tones commenced an appeal in behalf of the two and a half millions of our countrymen who are in slavery in our land.

He was listened to with almost breathless attention; the interest of the audience was so intense that the noise outside the house had not been noticed. Most of the people did not believe — how could they? — that there were those among us sufficiently misled to do what has scarcely ever been done in our country, — violate the sanctity of the Sabbath by a reckless and outrageous assault upon a peaceable assemblage. But we were made to believe it when a stone was thrown, breaking the window, and scattering the glass among the startled audience. But all were soon still, and listening to the calm tones of the speaker. I only felt fear for the speaker, as his figure was visible on the outside, and I was not mistaken, for the next moment a heavy missile was thrown forcibly against the window of the pulpit. The speaker paused an instant, and then endeavored to proceed. But another heavy stone thrown among the crowd drove most of the audience from their seats, and a fourth and heavier stone from without completed the scene of confusion. The lecturer was anxious to proceed, but expressed his willingness to be guided by the advice of his friends. Rev. E. N. Harris arose, and remarked that the unlawful proceedings had so disturbed the meeting that it would be useless for his brother May to attempt to go on with his remarks. Yielding to the advice of his friend, and to the dictate of prudence, the speaker closed his notes, and the crowd who were hurrying towards the door paused as the blessing of the God of all peace was invoked by the outraged advocate of human rights."

Elizabeth Whittier does not tell to her diary

how she and her friend, Harriet Minot, daughter of Judge Minot, took the hands of Mr. May, one on each side, and pushed their way through the mob of their townsmen, and, though rudely treated, were not injured. Neither does she tell the most shameful part of the story. A heavily loaded cannon had been dragged near the church, and at the same time the wooden steps at the doors had been pulled away. The plan of the miscreants was to break the windows and discharge the cannon, thus causing a rush to the doors, and, the steps being removed, the audience would have been precipitated several feet; limbs would have been broken, and perhaps lives lost in the panic. For some reason, the gun was not fired, and the brief pause for the benediction gave time to discover that the steps were removed and to replace them. Miss Whittier and Miss Minot were well known to the citizens of Haverhill, and that Mr. May was not roughly handled when he came out of the church was due to their protection. The mob was composed of about two hundred men and boys. It was probably known in the town that Thompson arrived on Saturday, and it was supposed he was at this meeting. Perhaps the disturbance grew out of this misunderstanding, for there was a bitter feeling against the famous English orator, which was just then working like leaven throughout New England.

Whittier and Thompson, entirely unconscious of the disturbance they left behind them, were on their way to meet a more violent mob. The

object of their journey was to visit Nathaniel P. Rogers, at Plymouth, N. H. They arrived on Monday, and Thompson delivered three lectures in the place, which were well received. On their way to Plymouth, they had stopped for the night at Concord, at the house of George Kent, who was a brother-in-law of Rogers. Kent made preparations during their absence for an anti-slavery meeting, to be held in Concord upon their return. He caused handbills to be circulated, announcing a meeting at the court house, Friday evening, September 4, at which "the principles, views, and operations of the abolitionists would be explained, and questions answered, by George Thompson and John G. Whittier." Nearly all his life Mr. Whittier avoided public speaking, but in those days he occasionally addressed anti-slavery meetings. Kent's handbill made a great stir. At a political meeting held Thursday evening, a protest was made against allowing the abolitionists a hearing in Concord. The selectmen warned those who were active in the matter that it would be unsafe to hold the proposed meeting, but they persisted. As the hour set for the meeting approached, a crowd, evidently bent on mischief, filled the street in front of the court house, and the selectmen ordered that the doors should not be opened. Thereupon the multitude, determined that "the incendiary Thompson" should not escape them, began the search for him, and the cry was raised, "To George Kent's, and the wine in his cellar." On their way they met Whittier, who was with J. H. Kimball, editor of the "Herald."

His Quaker coat did not prevent the mob from supposing he was Thompson. They began to pelt him with rotten eggs,[1] with mud and stones, although Kimball assured them he was not the man they sought. He received only slight injuries, for though the missiles fell around them and upon them, no stone happened to touch their heads. They were somewhat lamed by those which struck them elsewhere, and were covered with the dirt of the street which had been cast at them. In speaking of it in later years, Mr. Whittier said he could remember the sound of the stones that missed their aim and struck the wooden fences by their side, and that it made him realize how St. Paul felt when he was thrice stoned. Mr. William A. Kent, a brother of George Kent, saw them passing his house, while thus beset, and though not an abolitionist, he opened his door to them, and they thankfully sprang up the steps three at a time. As soon as they were safely inside, the crowd, who were disposed to enter and pull them out, were bravely met by Mr. Kent, who told them that if they came in it would be over his dead body. The crowd were soon after convinced, by Rev. Mr. Thomas, a Unitarian clergyman (whose wife was a niece of N. P. Rogers), that they had mistaken their man, and passed on

[1] The coat Mr. Whittier wore on this occasion was so soiled by rotten eggs that it could never be cleansed. It was kept as a relic until after the war, when boxes of clothing were sent from Amesbury to the needy freedmen. Mr. Whittier contributed the old coat, among other things, and at least one Southern negro derived a benefit from the little affair that happened in New Hampshire thirty years earlier.

to George Kent's, where a small company of anti-slavery people had assembled to pay their respects to the famous English orator, and to the poet, his companion. Among these were two nieces of Daniel Webster, daughters of his brother Ezekiel. When the mob reached the house, Thompson had left it by a back street, accompanied by Mr. Kent. A demand was made that Thompson be sent out to them, which was answered with the assurance that he had gone, and that there were only ladies in the house. General Davis then addressed the crowd, and told them they had done all they came for; they had prevented Thompson from speaking, and he advised them to go home. They went away, but not homeward. After visiting the liquor saloons, they constructed an effigy, labeled it "George Thompson," and burned it in the State House park. Then they indulged in fireworks, and brought out a cannon to celebrate their victory.

In the mean time, Mr. Whittier, hearing the guns, and being anxious for the safety of his friends, changed his Quaker hat for that of Rev. Mr. Thomas, and, thus disguised, ventured again into the street, passed through the mob, which was frenzied with drink, and soon found Mr. Thompson, who had also returned to George Kent's. The mob came back from the State House to Mr. George Kent's, and kept up a disturbance from two o'clock to daybreak, having a suspicion that Thompson had returned. In the early morning, while the noisy multitude were shouting and firing guns about the house, an escape was effected. Their

horse was harnessed and brought to a side door. When Whittier, Thompson, and Rev. Mr. Putnam, of Dunbarton, were in the carriage, the gate was suddenly opened, and the horse was driven at a gallop through a mob too surprised to stop the carriage. They were soon out of hearing of the yells and gunshots of the maddened crowd. They left Concord by the way of the Hookset bridge, all other avenues being guarded, and hastened back towards Haverhill. Stopping at an inn, for breakfast, they found a little knot of rough men to whom the landlord was telling extravagant stories of the brave times at Haverhill, the last Sunday night, when George Thompson, the English incendiary, and a fanatical Quaker named Whittier, were so roughly handled that they could not soon address another abolition meeting. They had escaped into New Hampshire, and he showed a printed notice asking all good citizens to aid in securing Thompson, and giving him his just deserts. Whittier inquired how the rascal was to be recognized, and was answered, "Easily enough, he is a tonguey fellow." As they were about to leave, being already in the carriage, Whittier said to the landlord, "This is George Thompson, and my name is Whittier." The man stared with open mouth until they were out of sight. Brief accounts of the Concord mob were given to the press by both Whittier and Thompson, soon after the occurrence. They both make light of the affair, and mention but few of the incidents that have since been gathered from conversations with Mr. Whittier and from other sources. Thompson was so many times in jeopardy

in 1835, and had escaped unhurt so often from the hands of previous mobs, that the Concord violence made little impression upon him. Nearly fifty years after the event, Mr. Whittier met in Portland a man who confessed that he was one of the mob. Whittier asked what would have been done to Thompson and himself, if they had fallen into the hands of the crowd, and the man replied that preparations had been made to blacken their faces so that it would have been difficult to remove the coloring matter. Tar and feathers were also in readiness. Thompson returned with Whittier to East Haverhill, and spent a week at the old homestead. Elizabeth's talks with her diary are suspended during these days, but after their guest has gone she has time to write again, and says : —

"It must have been a noble sight! Five hundred patriotic citizens of New Hampshire, marching with cursing and shouting to the rescue of the Constitution! Even the Quaker coat of J. G. W. does not quite defend him from the chivalry of the brave band! It was a manifestation of extraordinary courage on the part of the belligerents to venture an attack on two Quaker gentlemen, walking soberly and peaceably under their broadbrims. Was there not a manifestation of Satanic influence in the rush of the crowd to George Kent's with the evident purpose of destruction to the beautiful mansion of an intelligent Christian, and kind-hearted fellow-citizen? . . . On First day evening, a prayer meeting was holden in our little schoolhouse, and George Thompson, the man who passed triumphant and applauded through all the great

cities of England and Scotland, as the eloquent pleader for the poor down-trodden slaves of the British colonies, whose appeals have been listened to and admired by immense audiences, was present, and at the earnest request of Rev. J. R. Cushing briefly addressed the meeting, before closing it with a truly fervid and Christian prayer. . . . George Thompson left us on Second day morning, and I was very, very sorry to have him go. I had begun to think of him not with the reverence and awe I used to connect with the name of George Thompson, the eloquent English orator, but quite as a dear friend. It is altogether too high, too happy a station. I am not worthy to be *his* friend, but I am proud that I am privileged to think of him as *my* friend. . . . As an appendix to our loss of Second day, Greenleaf left us on Third day, to recommence his legislative duties at Boston."

One other mob Mr. Whittier encountered in these times, and the story of it is as follows: An Essex County anti-slavery convention was to be held in Newburyport, in 1837, but no hall or church could be obtained, and so the meeting was held in the garden of Mrs. Charles Butler, on Brown Square. A rough crowd from the wharves, led by citizens who considered themselves respectable, broke up the meeting by beating upon tin pans, blowing fish-horns, and howling. They also assaulted some of the speakers, causing little injury, however, except to clothing. Henry B. Stanton, who was one of the speakers, had the buttons cut from his coat. Mr. Whittier relates this incident of the affair: —

"As we were being assailed with decayed eggs, sticks, and light missiles, I thought discretion the better part of valor, and hurried away at what my friend N. P. Rogers called 'an undignified trot,' in company with an aged Orthodox minister, one of the few who had the moral courage to attend an anti-slavery meeting in those days, and who was settled in a neighboring town. As soon as we stopped to recover breath, I said to him: 'I am surprised that we should be disturbed in a quiet, Puritan city like Newburyport. I 've lived near it for years, and thought it was a pious city.' Laying his hand on my shoulder the clergyman said, 'Young man, when you are as old as I am you will understand that it is easier to be pious than it is to be good.'"

In these New England mobs Mr. Whittier has said he never apprehended serious danger to life or limb, and indeed he was better prepared for such danger than for anything like personal indignity. The thought of such indignities affected him more than even the dread of death. In an article published in the "Atlantic Monthly," February, 1874, he says: —

"I had read John Trumbull's description of the tarring and feathering of his hero, McFingal, when, after the application of the melted tar, the feather-bed was ripped open and shaken over him, until

> 'Not Maia's son, with wings for ears,
> Such plumes about his visage wears,
> Nor Milton's six-winged angel gathers
> Such superfluity of feathers;'

and I confess I was quite unwilling to undergo a martyrdom which my best friends could scarcely refrain from laughing at."

In a letter to his friend Thayer, who was then editing the "Commercial Herald" in Philadelphia, under date Haverhill, 29th of 11th mo., 1835, Mr. Whittier writes that he is busy with farm work, and adds: "Anti-slavery is going on well in spite of mobs, Andover Seminary, and *rum*. This town has gone for Jackson, and our senators have got in (four of them) with the skin of their teeth. The State is almost Van Burenized."

Early in 1836, Mr. Thayer urged him to come to Philadelphia, to engage in a newspaper enterprise with him. He replied from the old homestead in Haverhill (where he appears to have been snowbound again), under date of 16th of 2d mo., 1836: —

"Blocked up by a four-feet snow I have had no means of sending to the village. . . . I must decline thy proposal; my health recently has been uncertain, and I am just getting over an attack of my old complaint, — palpitation of the heart. I should not dare to engage in such an undertaking at present. I nevertheless have wished a hundred times that we could be together as formerly, as we used to agree so perfectly on most points."

During part of the year 1836, Mr. Whittier was editing the Haverhill "Gazette," while managing his farm. Early in 1837, he had again a call to Philadelphia, this time to edit an anti-slavery paper. At about the same time he had a call to Portland. The following paragraphs from a letter

to Mr. Thayer were written while undecided. He writes from Amesbury, 31st of 3d mo., 1837 : —

"I have a wish on many accounts to live in your city; but the Portland folks are very desirous of getting me to go 'Down East.' They have offered me $1200 per annum. The climate would not, however, suit me so well as yours, and, to tell the truth, there is hardly field enough for doing a great deal of good in Maine, at present. Our friends in Boston are fully persuaded that the grand battle is now to be fought in Pennsylvania, between mobocracy (excited by the slaveholding influence of Virginia and Maryland, and by the President's outrageous and abominable sentiments expressed in his inaugural message) and the friends of liberty. One word, *sub rosa:* If Ritner can be sustained in his own State, the entire North, save New Hampshire and Maine, would go for him for the Presidency. I have not felt at liberty to go to Portland until I have heard from Philadelphia. On the receipt of a letter I shall be able to decide immediately."

The decision arrived at, some months later, was in favor of Philadelphia.

CHAPTER V.

REMOVAL TO AMESBURY.

1836–1838.

In April, 1836, the Haverhill farm, of one hundred and forty-eight acres, was sold to Aaron Chase, and a cottage in the village of Amesbury was bought a few weeks afterward. This one-story cottage, which was enlarged and remodeled at various times, was the poet's home until his death, a period of a little more than fifty-six years. The farm was sold for $3000, and the house and lot in Amesbury cost $1200. Two reasons induced the selling of the farm and the removal to Amesbury. Mr. Whittier was so fully occupied with his literary and reform work, and at the same time so broken in health, that it became necessary for him to give up the care of a difficult farm; moreover, there was no Friends' meeting nearer than Amesbury, and his mother and sister found it beyond their strength to attend meetings regularly at such a distance. When the farm was sold, the horse was given up, and the poet never afterward owned one. The new home was located nearly opposite the Friends' meeting-house. The present meeting-house, built more than fifty years ago, upon plans made by Mr. Whittier, is not far distant on the same street.

Three successive meeting-houses have been built by the Friends in Amesbury during the past two hundred years, all of them on Friend Street, upon which Mr. Whittier's house stands. In the oldest one, Thomas Story, one of William Penn's councilors of state, held forth in 1704, when he defended his faith in a notable debate. He was the first man to express a doubt about the world being made in six literal days, and the first to suggest that the days alluded to in the Scripture account of the creation were ages in length. The present edifice was erected in 1851, and the details of its construction were left by the society to the care of Mr. Whittier. But as the poet had at that time mixed with the world's people more than most of his brethren, there was some fear among the more conservative that he would provide too many modern comforts for the worshipers — perhaps even give them a steeple! Mistrusting this, and to set their hearts at rest, he wisely employed as builders three venerable carpenters, one of whom was a Quaker minister, and the other two elders of the society. The result of their joint labors was, as might have been expected, a perfectly orthodox Quaker meeting-house, without steeple or filigree work of any kind,[1] but very neat and comfortable.

[1] Several years ago a worthy missionary, anxious to reform a pagan neighborhood in a town just over the New Hampshire border, called upon Mr. Whittier for a subscription. "Does thee propose to put a steeple on thy church?" he inquired. "Yes, sir." "Well, I am glad thee has undertaken to christianize that neighborhood, and am willing to help thee. But I am sorry about the steeple. I will subscribe, however, on condition that no part of *my* money goes into that extravagance."

The lot upon which the Amesbury cottage was built afforded a garden that every year produced a great variety of fruits and vegetables. The cottage, when bought by Whittier, had but four rooms and an attic chamber. There being no room for his aunt Mercy, he built a small addition at the southeast corner, which she occupied until her death, in 1846. In 1841, Joseph Sturge, the English philanthropist, had Whittier for a companion in his travels in the Middle States, and as far as Washington, and he came to Amesbury as Whittier's guest. He noticed the contracted quarters in which the poet lived, and in April, 1847, sent him one thousand dollars to be expended in the enlargement of the cottage. During the summer of that year the eastern end of the cottage was made two stories in height, and the room that had been Aunt Mercy's was nearly doubled in length, forming the apartment ever after known as the "garden room."

The book-shelves held only a small part of Mr. Whittier's constantly increasing library, which overflowed into nearly all the rooms. The northern window, next the desk, was in a door opening upon a little veranda, and gave a view of the street and the southern slope of Po Hill, which is close at hand. This pleasant little room naturally became the sitting-room of the family. For Mr. Whittier loved domesticity, and could read and write without disturbance in the midst of household affairs. It is the room held in most loving remembrance by the friends and visitors of the poet. In it he did his best work. Here "Snow-Bound" was written, and many of his

Mr. Whittier's Study at Amesbury

most popular poems. The western end of the house remained one story in height until the year 1884, when another story was added, giving the house its present appearance. In the midst of all the alterations here described, the little parlor, at the northwestern corner of the original cottage, has remained unchanged. This room also has its open fireplace.

The ancient towns of Amesbury and Salisbury, until within a few years, when they were consolidated, were divided by the Powow River, and the principal village of each town was located at the falls in this rapid stream. To a stranger they seemed but a single village, the river for most of its course being entirely hidden by the wide arches which span it to bear up the main street, and by the factories on each side of the stream. The part which is thus concealed is a fall of about eighty feet over jagged ledges, and here the power for the mills is obtained. In a letter to a friend who suggested that he celebrate Po Hill, the picturesque eminence overlooking his Amesbury residence (as Job's Hill overlooks his birthplace), he says: "I quite agree with thee that Po Hill is well worthy of being celebrated in song. I have mentioned it in my poem, 'Abram Morrison,' and in the prelude to 'Miriam.' It is also referred to in 'Cobbler Keezar's Vision,' in which the swift Powow stream is described as it appeared to the early settlers, coming down from the south side of the hill in a series of cascades, the finest of which are now hidden by the mills, or arched over by the main street of busy Amesbury: —

"Woodsy and wild and lonesome,
The swift stream wound away,
Through birches and scarlet maples,
Flashing in foam and spray, —

"Down on the sharp-horned ledges
Plunging in steep cascade,
Tossing its white-maned waters
Against the hemlock's shade."

The family removed from Haverhill to Amesbury on the 6th of July, 1836. Seven weeks after, Elizabeth writes in her diary : —

"So now we are here at Amesbury, and must henceforth call it *home*. How strange! The evening I left our home at [East] Haverhill there was quite too much confusion to allow us to think. I spent a fortnight with sister Mary at Haverhill, and on our way to Amesbury we rode up to the old gateway which always before had worn the cheerful look of home. There was nothing there to welcome us, save my own poor cat — and she was right glad. . . . I have been here now five weeks, and save my brothers and sister have seen but five of my Haverhill friends, and certainly these few seemed dearer than ever. I wonder if I shall ever love Amesbury or its people! I shall when I forget the dear ones and things at Haverhill, perhaps. I know scarce any of the abolition people here, but expect to like them all — or at least their abolition."

She was soon after elected president of the Women's Anti-Slavery Society of Amesbury.

In bringing into one chapter the introduction of Whittier to the work which was so strongly to affect his nature and his occupation we have

anticipated the narrative, and now we partially retrace our steps to speak of his relations to political parties after leaving Hartford. Mr. Whittier's editorship of political papers in Boston and Hartford gave him a taste for political life which he enjoyed, and woke an ambition to be serviceable to his State and the nation, not only in moulding the policy of his party so as to aid the reforms he favored, but in selecting the men who were to carry its principles into effect. The following notes to Mr. Harriman, editor of the Haverhill "Iris," indicate how eagerly he followed public events from the seclusion of his farm.

EAST PARISH, 1831.

I have been embargoed for the past three weeks, unable to stir; and for a week past unable to *see*, the same persistent influenza having finally taken possession of my eyes. I send you something which I scrawled yesterday with a bandaged eye. Try to set it up correctly, for 't is horribly written. If you could notice my leaving the paper at Hartford, and mention at the same time that I was for some time editor of the "Essex Gazette," and that had I remained so I should have warmly advocated the cause of Mr. Cushing, it might do good at this time. But say nothing disparagingly of Mr. Thayer. He is on the wrong side, but he does pretty well with a bad cause. Did you ever read Burke's speeches and writings? If not, read them attentively. They will prove valuable to you, as they have to me.

East Parish, 2d of 2d mo., 1832.

I am starving for newspapers; I now and then get one from Boston and Washington, but not until they are gray-headed with age. Could you send me a lot of papers of any kind? Cushing's speech is excellent, admirably calculated for the *Lowell* meridian. If he should be nominated, he would get it next trial. I don't like, however, what he says of General Jackson.

Have you Mr. Choate's speech on the tariff, made last session? I have never seen it. I see that he has lately made a speech on Verplanck's bill, in which he unequivocally admits the necessity of *reducing the revenue to fifteen millions.* You mention a *rumor* about Clay and Webster. I trust that Mr. Webster will beware how he lends himself to Jacksonism, and that Mr. Clay will hold aloof from Nullification. The one is Scylla, the other Charybdis. But I *do* hope that Mr. Clay will oppose the placing of the whole military force of the United States in the hands of General Jackson. I would as soon trust it in the hands of the devil. To be consistent he *must* do so. Both Mr. Clay and Mr. Calhoun denounced the lawless conduct of the military chieftain in Pensacola, and in the Seminole war.

1832.

There is no other way but to go right ahead with Cushing. The other party hold a sort of convention to-day, I understand. But whatever they may offer, *beware of them.*

I have got the rheumatism to pay for riding in the teeth of the northwest wind from Newburyport.

To the end of his life he cherished all the privileges of citizenship, and, believing in parties, abandoned no political organization so long as he saw a chance of keeping it engaged in the reforms upon which he set his heart. Beginning his political life as a partisan of Clay, he did not give him up until he saw it was useless to expect the great Kentuckian to come out as the champion of freedom. He stood by other political friends with the same steadfastness, even when he had much to criticise in their conduct, and he never shirked the duty of criticising.[1] Nothing but the delicacy of his health, at critical times, prevented his being the candidate of his party for important places when a nomination was equivalent to an election, in the early part of his career. In a letter never before published, dated Haverhill, 8th mo., 1832, to an early and valued friend in Cincinnati, he wrote: —

"Six months ago I really considered myself a citizen of Cincinnati. I had determined upon going to the West. I left Hartford with regret,

[1] "His natural interest in affairs, and strong love of humanity, made him a willing and active worker in the field of politics and reform. For he was by instinct a political as well as a moral reformer, and dearly loved the conflict of ballots. He often gave expression to his views of public policy in the newspapers, in later life, and his opinions on political measures carried weight with leaders of national repute. His interest in party success sometimes brought him to the border line of expediency, jarring upon the uncompromising notions of his non-voting abolition friends. It was hard for him to abandon the Whig party, and impossible to cut loose from the Republican, but his political sagacity and judgment were maintained. While advocating the reëlection of Harrison in 1892, he foresaw and prophesied the success of Cleveland." — *W. L. Garrison in Brooklyn Address, December* 17, 1892.

for I had formed acquaintances there and established friendships which had become, as it were, a part of my being. I returned to Haverhill, and started for the South the first of December [1831]. Being a member of the National Republican convention [a delegate from Hartford] I intended to spend a part of the winter in Baltimore and Washington. On reaching Boston, I was taken with the influenza, which, added to previous ill health, kept me at home during the whole winter. In the spring [of 1832] the precarious state of my health, and some prospects which were held out to me by my political friends, induced me to remain in this section of the country. These prospects might have been realized before this but for a circumstance over which I had no control. You know what a tedious time we have had here relative to the choice of Representative to Congress. My political friends insisted upon my allowing myself to be a candidate. Astonished as I was at such an unexpected prospect, I could only assure them that my age presented, to say nothing of anything else, an insuperable barrier, the Constitution requiring twenty-five years, and my age being only twenty-four. . . . I should not have mentioned it but to account for my remaining in this section of the country. . . . I have written little for a long time save upon dry politics. I hate Jackson, or rather Jackson's measures, most cordially. I admire Clay, and shall do all I can to promote his success."

The "tedious time" referred to in the above letter was in connection with the candidacy of

Caleb Cushing, who began his efforts to get into Congress in 1826, and did not succeed until 1834. He had many enemies in his own party, which prevented his election in a district where his side was usually in the ascendant. He was occasionally disposed to transfer to some friend who could unite the factions of his party the burden of the candidacy. There were seventeen Congressional elections in the North Essex district between 1831 and 1833, and the seat in the national legislature to which this district was entitled was vacant during nearly the whole term. In the summer of 1832 there was a suggestion to unite the party by nominating Mr. Whittier. Mr. Thayer, editor of the Haverhill "Gazette," had been an opponent of Cushing, but could be depended upon to favor Whittier, and the young poet was quite willing to accept the position. His few years' experience in "practical politics" had fostered an ambition for power and patronage, of which those can have no idea who knew him only after he had devoted himself to philanthropic labors. After leaving his political editorship in Boston and Hartford, and coming back to his farm, he found his friend Edwin Harriman editing the Haverhill "Iris," a Cushing paper. He contributed many political articles to the "Iris," and one or two partisan poems, like the satirical verses addressed to the "Poetical Trio," given in a preceding chapter. Here is a private letter to Harriman which illustrates the motives and methods of Whittier's ambition, before the great change which came over his spirit a year or two later. He suggests that an election can be

prevented in November by keeping Cushing in the field, if the Kittredge faction also nominate a candidate, while the Newburyport friends of Cushing may be encouraged to hope there will be no Kittredge candidate. After the November trial he will himself be old enough to go to Congress. The letter is dated "East Parish, Wednesday morning," probably in August, 1832.

"Since conversing with you yesterday, a new objection to our project has occurred to me, — the Constitution requires that the Representative shall be twenty-five years of age. I shall not be twenty-five till the 17th of December. So that I would not be eligible at the *next* trial in November. This, you will see, gives a different aspect to the whole affair. *Perhaps*, however, if the contest is *prolonged* till after the next time, the project might be put in execution.

"Suppose you advocate a holding on to Mr. C. in your Newburyport letter? Suppose, too, that you nominate in your paper Mr. Cushing without any one-sided convention? After the trial in November, you can *then* use the arguments in favor of our plan which you propose to do now; and if it suits Mr. C. he can then *request* his friends to give their votes for some other individual for the sake of promoting peace in the district. The Kittredge committee would in that case probably nominate a candidate, — if one could be found, — but, I understand Mr. Thayer, not with the expectation of his being elected.

"If I were nominated after the November trial, Mr. Thayer, situated as he and I relatively are,

would support the nomination, and let the other candidate go, as he did John Merrill. Purdy, the 'Telegraph,' and the 'Essex Register' would do the same.

"The truth of the matter is, the thing would be peculiarly beneficial to me, — if not at home it would be so abroad. It would give me an opportunity of seeing and knowing our public characters, and in case of Mr. Clay's election might enable me to do something for myself or my friends. It would be worth more to me *now*, young as I am, than almost any office after I had reached the meridian of life.

"In this matter, if I know my own heart, I am not entirely selfish. I never yet *deserted a friend*, and I never will. If my friends enable me to acquire influence, it shall be exerted for *their benefit*. And give me once an opportunity of exercising it, my first object shall be to evince my gratitude by exertions in behalf of those who had conferred such a favor upon me.

"If you write to Newburyport to-day, you can say that we are willing and ready to do all we can at the next trial; say, too, that the Kittredge folks will scarcely find a candidate, and that there may be a chance for Cushing better than he has yet had; that at all events it can do no harm; and that if after that trial Mr. C. sees fit to request his friends not to vote for him for the 22d Congress, there will be as good a chance then of electing a Cushing man as there is now. Say, too, if you please, that I am ready to go on with the contest, and you had better recommend mildness in the process of electioneering."

In October, 1833, he wrote to his old Hartford friend, Jonathan Law: —

"I am happy to hear that the overthrow of our political party has not depressed thee. Alas for National Republicanism! It yet lingers here in this State, but desertions are rapidly thinning its once firm ranks, and in a year those who know it now will know it no more forever. I speak of the great majority. For myself, I see no reason for a change of opinion, and I should as soon think of worshiping the devil with the Manicheans, as to fall down and do homage to Andrew Jackson with the idolatrous 'spoils party' of the day. No, the old man is no better than he was when we battled him in Hartford; nay, I am inclined to think age has improved him, as death did Sheridan's fat friar, 'in the wrong way.' His late manifesto on the United States Bank is as full of egotistical authority as an imperial ukase, or a Turkish firman. And then, there is that 'foregone conclusion,' Martin Van Buren, clinging to the skirts of the old General, and whoever does homage to the latter is aiding the 'political grimalkin' (as Clinton called him) to slip into the Presidency, *nolens volens*. J. Q. Adams is nominated for governor by the anti-Masons in this State; he is a strong candidate, but he will not go down. John Davis, our candidate, is a very able man, and popular withal. There will probably be no choice by the people. Edward Everett has joined the anti-Masons, and there 's a terrible hubbub about it. Daniel Webster, they say, is anti-Masonic, but Dan is crafty, and will

not hang out his flag at present. As for you in Connecticut, you are disgracing yourselves as much as possible by black laws and grog-shop laws. God grant you a speedy deliverance from Jacksonism. . . . I am busy on my farm as a beaver building his dam. My health is vastly improved; the blues have left me; I go to husking frolics, and all that sort of thing. I have put the veto upon poetry; read all I can find, politics, history, rhyme, reason, etc., and am happy, — at least I believe I am. I have written some considerable upon slavery, and have been pretty roughly handled by the Southerners. But so long as I can intrench myself behind my Quakerism, as a tortoise does under his shell, I am perfectly safe. The slavery question is getting to be an absorbing one, and the recent noble act of Great Britain will contribute to effect a change in this country. . . . As to your suggestion about poetry, I must decline attending to it. I have knocked Pegasus on the head, as a tanner does his bark-mill donkey, when he is past service. I am fixed at Haverhill, as Pope says, —

> 'Fixed as a plant to one peculiar spot,
> To draw nutrition, propagate and rot.' "

The feeling against slavery had been growing strong enough to have a marked effect upon the National Republican party in Massachusetts, although for several years no third party took the field. The abolitionists, led in Essex County by Whittier, questioned the candidates as to their opinion in regard to the right of petition and slavery in the District of Columbia. They would

vote only for those who promised to present and defend petitions for the abolition of slavery in the District and in the Territories. Cushing was distrusted by the anti-slavery men generally. But Whittier recognized his great ability, and wished to turn it to account in aiding the cause of liberty. Before each election, in 1834, 1836, and 1838, he secured Cushing's unqualified pledges in favor of *some* of the measures demanded by the abolitionists. He then used his whole influence, and secured his election each time. Cushing acknowledged that he owed his success to his young Quaker friend, and redeemed his pledge by presenting the anti-slavery petitions which Whittier caused to be poured in upon him from every part of the Essex district. That Cushing's heart was not in it is shown by the disclaimers he made as he presented the petitions. But he supported John Quincy Adams in his demand that every petition should be received, no matter what was called for, and respectfully referred to the appropriate committee. His spirited speeches equaled those of Adams himself, in eloquence and in courage. The "gag rule" introduced by Jarvis, of Maine, was opposed by him with great ability, but he took pains to say that he did not fully approve of the petitions he insisted should be received. Whittier kept him up to his work by canvassing the Essex North district and forwarding petitions from every town where he could obtain signers to them.

As an illustration of the manner in which Whittier plied Cushing with material for speeches

and sought to keep him in line, the following letters have an interest.

NEWBURYPORT, 25th of 10th mo., 1834.

I am disappointed in not seeing thee at this place and this time, as I called to apprise thee of the fact that at our meeting of the Essex County Anti-Slavery Society yesterday at Danvers, it was unanimously agreed upon to write letters to the candidates for Congress and state legislature on the subject of slavery and of their views of action in Congress and in the legislature upon it. Until after the passage of this resolution I did not reflect that it would embrace thyself and Osgood [his Democratic opponent], as we were thinking of Saltonstall and Rantoul [in the other Essex district]. As it is, however, I hope thee will favor the Society with an explicit answer, as the one hundred and twenty delegates present pledged themselves to vote for no man of any party who was not in favor of abolition in the District of Columbia. I heard, too, from a gentleman in the meeting, that two or three hundred of the legal voters of Lowell have pledged themselves to this effect.

HAVERHILL, 3d of 11th mo., 1834.

Several individuals, personally and politically thy friends, have suggested to me the idea of addressing thee in regard to thy sentiments in relation to slavery in the District of Columbia. From this I have uniformly dissuaded them by assuring them that, although friendly to Colonization and consequently opposed to Immediate Emancipation

and many of their views, I could have no manner of doubt of thy willingness to do all in thy power to remove slavery from the District, where it exists without warrant from the Constitution, and in its most aggravated form. By this assurance I have, I believe, fully satisfied the individuals to whom I allude. Perhaps in making it I have unintentionally misrepresented thy views and feelings. If so, I can only say that my motives were of the most friendly nature. In the present posture of affairs in this district any formal interrogation of candidates in reference to matters of this kind is certainly to be deprecated. But nothing is more certain than that the time is close at hand when it cannot be avoided. The spirit working deep in the heart of New England will not slumber. Party machinery will not much longer repress it. If I have rightly represented thy views it would be a great satisfaction to myself to be able to put a line from thee to that effect in the hands of two or three gentlemen previous to the coming election. If on the other hand I have mistaken them, thee will oblige me by making no reply whatever in reference to the particular subject of this letter. Thayer has been acting with a great deal of prudence as well as firmness in the support of the Whig nominations.

20th of 2d mo., 1836.

I send thee three small petitions, and will trouble thee no more for the present session. Many thanks for thy defense of Adams, and of the petitioners of Massachusetts. We have just

got the question before the legislature in relation to the right of petition, as violated by the resolution in Congress of the 18th of January. It will probably be protested against on the part of our legislature, and thus you will be fully supported at home.

HAVERHILL, 1st of 3d mo., 1836.

I am greatly obliged to thee for thy account of the state of politics at Washington. It is, however, pretty much as I had previously supposed. My object in making the remark thee allude to was to put thee on thy guard in reference to the state of parties *here*. Our last election was ominous. The Whig *party* cannot stand much longer in Massachusetts. The Whig *men*, with the exercise of a prudence and forecast perfectly consistent with sound principles, may. I notice that the Southern and Western Whigs take every possible occasion in Congress to attack Van Buren and his friends at the North. This course would be fatal to the Massachusetts delegation. A firm and steady support of Daniel Webster, without playing into the hands of the White and Harrison parties, or volunteering attacks upon the Van Buren party, is, it appears to me, the safest course for yourselves, and the best for the true interests of the State. Thy skirmish with Hardin, of Kentucky, and its triumphant result on thy part, has gained thee no small degree of credit among *all* parties here. It discovered an untrammeled and independent spirit, and a determination to defend the honor and the interests of thy constituents,

irrespective of partisan feelings. I like the old-fashioned democratic tone of thy speech on the right of petition. The Van Buren organ in this district copied two paragraphs of it with approbation. On the right of free speech and communications there will be a splendid opportunity to maintain the vital principles of democracy; to hold up before the nation the now universally detested Sedition Law; to speak of those who suffered by it, and to set the Democrats of Virginia and South Carolina of 1800 in battle array against the position of these "chivalrous" sovereignties at the present time. It will be sport to see the "engineer hoist with his own petard." I wish that some one of the Massachusetts delegation would just tell the Southerners that the old Bay State was *never* a slave State; that, although slavery existed here, it was recognized by our laws only as an existing evil, and stood only upon its own execrable foundation of robbery and wrong; that our courts of justice were temples of refuge for the slaves long before the Constitution of 1780. Thus, in 1770, a suit was instituted by a slave in our judicial courts for freedom and recompense for his services after attaining the age of twenty-one years, and the court decided in his favor. Other suits were in consequence instituted, and all terminated in favor of liberty. (Vide Dr. Belknap's answer to Judge Tucker.) On the part of the slave it was pleaded that servitude was a violation of the colony's charter, and of the fundamental law of England, that no person could be deprived of liberty but by the judgment

of his peers. These facts are doubtless familiar to thee, and I only wish to call thy attention to them.

HAVERHILL, 12th of 12th mo., 1836.

I send thee three or four petitions, and there 's "mair a-comin'." We need not tell thee that we want a hearing before Congress, and that we must have it somehow or other. The next year we shall send double the number, and so on, until the united voice of New England thunders upon the ear of Congress.

PHILADELPHIA, 16th of 1st mo., 1837.

I expected to have been in Washington ere this; but shall remain here until after the Harrisburg fanatical convention. . . . How are the abolition petitions received? I am looking with a good deal of anxiety for the presentment of the petitions from Essex County.

BOSTON, 13th of 3d mo., 1837.

I send with this a copy of the report and resolutions of the committee on the subject of slavery and the right of petition. These resolutions, or others stronger, will pass in both Houses. The message of Van Buren, and the course of the Van Buren party in Congress, have induced the leading Whigs to take this course. Many of the Van Buren men will go for the report. I am thankful that Massachusetts will thus nobly sustain her Representatives, and assert the right of her citizens "peaceably to assemble and petition for the

redress of grievances." I regret we have not yet been favored with thy speech in Congress in the great debate on the John Quincy Adams petition. It would have done good [in promoting the passage of the resolutions before the legislature]. What is the meaning of Van Buren's message? Is it the settled policy of "the government" to "go to the death" for slavery? Will the old Calhoun party accept the veto pledge of Van Buren as a sufficient peace offering, ground their arms, and wear the brands and ear-marks of "the party"? I have been amused in looking at Ritchie's comments on the message. They are full of the childishness and garrulousness of dotage gratified in its childish whims. But one thing is certain: Van Buren will lose Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania by his extraordinary veto threat. How much he will gain by it at the South remains to be seen.

AMESBURY, 14th of 4th mo., 1837.

Our county anti-slavery society holds its quarterly meeting in this place on the 21st. As the secretary of the society and the person who forwarded the petitions to Congress, I wish to state to the meeting what was the fate of their petitions. The reports of Congressional proceedings are not accurate or full. Next session our American society will have two reporters in Washington. Could thee write me a letter in reference to the reception of the petitions, and permit me to read it as a private but not strictly confidential letter to myself? A similar request will be made to Mr. Phillips. Of course I do not

expect you to avow yourselves to be other than what you are now understood to be, — anti-abolition. But as an abolitionist I am grateful to both of you for your defense of the character of the petitioners, and for your manly stand for the periled right of petition.

The first draft of Cushing's reply to the above note is folded with it among his papers. He gives the list of petitions, and tells which have been presented and which are to be hereafter offered.

The records of Congress show that Haverhill and Amesbury did more than their share in petitioning, and Mr. Whittier's hand is to be seen in the whole movement in that part of Massachusetts. The famous Haverhill petition of 1842 created a remarkable scene in the national House of Representatives. The Southern members were exasperated by the persistency with which these petitions were offered by John Quincy Adams and Caleb Cushing. They threatened a dissolution of the Union, unless even the right of petition was denied upon topics that directly or indirectly affected their "peculiar institution." It was in part to rebuke these hollow threats of dissolution that the Haverhill petition, with forty-three signers, was presented by John Quincy Adams. It read as follows: —

"The undersigned, citizens of Haverhill, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, pray that you will immediately adopt measures, peaceably to dissolve the union of these States: First, because no union can be agreeable or permanent which

does not present prospects of reciprocal benefit; second, because a vast proportion of the resources of one section of the Union is annually drained to sustain the views and course of another section without any adequate return; third, because (judging from the history of past nations) this union, if persisted in, in the present course of things, will certainly overwhelm the whole nation in utter destruction."

The wildest storm ever witnessed in the House was raised by this petition. A resolution to expel Mr. Adams for presenting it was debated for four days, on the ground that he had offered the deepest indignity to the House, the greatest insult to the American people, and that he was even guilty of high treason. Mr. Adams's intrepid bearing throughout the tumult his action had caused saved that venerable statesman from an expulsion that was meant to be ignominious. He had explained at the outset that he did not favor the petition, but demanded that all respectful petitions should be considered. Whether this particular petition was written by Mr. Whittier is not certain, but as it came from his native town at a time when he was actively circulating petitions, it is probable he had something to do with it. One of the petitions sent to Adams, which, however, he did not present, though he tantalized his opponents by exhibiting it, was a satire upon the objection that most of the petitioners were women, who had no business to mingle in public affairs. This petition prayed that Congress would memorialize the British government to dethrone Victoria, on the ground that

women had departed from their proper sphere of duty when they assumed the management of public affairs!

When nominated by the Whigs in 1838, Cushing was not inclined to pledge himself again to his anti-slavery constituents. He thought he was strong enough in his district to get along without making again the disagreeable pledges by which he had been bound in former years. Besides, Whittier had gone to Philadelphia, where he was editing the "Freeman," and Cushing thought he had a fair field for an unpledged election. But his hopes were dashed by the appearance of his Quaker friend on the scene at the last moment. Whether Whittier came home on purpose to manage this election does not appear; but he was present at the Liberty party convention in Salem to which Cushing sent an ingeniously worded but non-committal letter, referring to his past record in the matter of the right of petition and the domestic slave trade in the District of Columbia. A question had been asked him in regard to the Territories; and he replied that he objected to interfering with the institution in Florida, while a Territory. He called attention to the fact that in a previous session he voted against a resolution declaring that Congress ought not to interfere with slavery in the District. He had also voted against the admission of Arkansas as a slave State. He would do the same in the case of Florida, when it should call for statehood. He was in favor of restricting the domestic slave trade, which he said had not even the poor excuse of the foreign slave trade, that it

transfers men from a barbarous to a civilized community. But he declined to pledge himself to specific measures, saying, "I cling to my personal independence as the choicest and richest of all possessions. I will take my place in Congress as a freeman or not at all, pledged only to Truth, Liberty, and the Constitution, with no terror before my eyes but the terror to do wrong. Thus, or not at all, will I reascend the giant stairs of the Capitol." Whittier was determined to get a more explicit pledge or prevent his election. At his suggestion, his friend Henry B. Stanton read Cushing's letter and commented upon it in a humorous and caustic way, and the convention adjourned without any action in his favor. Cushing, who was anxious to secure the Liberty vote, was in a corner of the gallery while his communication was being criticised. In the evening, he met Whittier at the hotel, and expressed his chagrin at the reception given his careful letter. He said, "What shall I do?" Whittier replied, "Thee cannot expect the votes of our people, unless thee speaks more plainly." "But how can I do that now?" said Cushing. Whittier suggested, "Write a short letter to me, and do not hide thy meaning under many words." Cushing did not feel like doing it, but said at length, "Let me see you in the morning." Whittier was to leave for home by stage quite early, and promised to call for Cushing. He found the anxious statesman half-dressed, and waiting for him. He had decided to sign any letter that Whittier would write. Whittier thereupon wrote the short letter that follows,

which Cushing copied and signed, and it was sent to all parts of the Essex district by special messengers: —

SALEM, November 8, 1838.

MY DEAR SIR, — I should regret to have any doubt remain on your mind as to the import of those points of my letter which are referred to by you. In respect to the District of Columbia, I am in favor of the abolition of slavery and the slave trade therein, by the earliest practicable legislation of Congress, regard being had for the just rights of all classes of the citizens, and I intended to be so understood.

In the concluding part of the letter, I stated that I felt bound to withhold stipulation in detail, as to my future course in Congress. But I did not design it to be understood that I entertained any desire or disposition to change my course in regard to the subjects embraced in the letter; but, on the contrary, being resolved to continue to maintain on all suitable occasions, as I have heretofore done, the principles and spirit of the resolves of the legislature of Massachusetts, appertaining to the right of petition, and to slavery and the slave trade, in their various relations.

I am, very faithfully, yours,

CALEB CUSHING.[1]

To JOHN G. WHITTIER, Esq.

[1] This letter got into the papers at the South, and they taunted Cushing with having given a double pledge to the abolitionists. Whittier came to his defense in the *Pennsylvania Freeman*, explaining the matter as follows: "A private note from him in reply to one from ourself as his former neighbor and personal friend,

This letter was satisfactory, gave Cushing the Liberty votes, elected him by 1800 majority, and made him a third time indebted to Whittier for his election. He was kept up to his promises by constant reminders, and his course during this term also was in general satisfactory to his anti-slavery constituents. The tactics of Whittier in his dealings with Cushing, throughout the Congressional career of that statesman, are amusingly shown in a letter written from Haverhill, January 10, 1836, to his friend Thayer in Philadelphia: —

"The anti-slavery folks have circulated a petition to Congress in the village, and it has been signed by about one hundred and twenty legal voters. We shall plague Cushing with it, but he had as lief see the Old Enemy himself as see it. 'T is nothing to the dose we shall fix for Congress next year. We 'll haunt 'em, and torment 'em, till they behave better. We 'll prosecute our suit with a pertinacity which shall rival that of William Vans, or Walter Scott's Peter Peebles. . . . What has got into the Pennsylvania Quakers? Who would have expected to see them tossing their broadbrims into the air for the 'Hero of Tippecanoe'?"

asking an explanation of some points in his letter to the anti-slavery committee, was published and circulated in the district on our own responsibility. He was not elected as an abolitionist, but his whole course in Congress on this question has been honorable to himself — manly, open, and consistent. Whatever else the papers may say of him, they cannot accuse him of being a 'dough-face.' He has never betrayed his constituents, nor compromised the honor and dignity of the Pilgrim State, on the question of human liberty."

In 1840, all kinds of hat-brims were being tossed up for the "Hero of Tippecanoe," and in the midst of the general enthusiasm, Cushing thought he could safely cut loose from the bondage to the "anti-slavery folks" that had galled him for his first three terms in Congress. He made no pledges that year, and was nevertheless elected, but he found to his sorrow that he was not yet done with Whittier. In 1841, the Whigs came into power, and Cushing looked for some office of national importance. He would have obtained it but for the anti-slavery record Whittier had forced upon him, and perhaps in spite of that record, if Whittier had held his peace. President Tyler three times nominated him as Secretary of the Treasury; but the Senate rejected him each time with increasing majorities.[1] Whittier had taken pains to republish that letter of 1838, which Cushing had signed at his direction, and had prefaced it with these comments: —

"Caleb Cushing. — As our distinguished and talented fellow-citizen of Essex North may erelong be before the Senate of the United States for a high post, we think it well to let them understand in good season that Mr. Cushing is no less an abolitionist than Edward Everett [whom the Senate had previously rejected]. When questioned by the abolitionists previous to his election in 1838, his reply was rather vague and unsatisfactory. It was so judged by the abolitionists in convention

[1] Ten years later, Cushing, then a member of the Massachusetts legislature, when trying to prevent the election of Sumner to the Senate, again came into unsuccessful collision with Whittier.

assembled, and the prospect was that he would lose his election. At the eleventh hour, his personal friend, John G. Whittier, went to him and told him of his danger, and he penned the following explanation, which saved his election by 1800 votes. We shall see whether he will eat back this explanation for the sake of being premier or anything else under John Tyler of Virginia."

Whittier's skill in handling all the weapons of politics in behalf of a cause which both the great parties at the North were then doing their best to keep out of the field of their controversies, was shown in many ways even before he assisted in forming the great party of freedom which in twenty years placed Abraham Lincoln at the head of our government. From first to last, he refused to come out from his party until he had done all that could be done to induce it to assist in the work of reform. He would not cast aside a strong man, if he could get ever so little of his strength committed to the cause he had at heart. This was strikingly illustrated in the Cushing incident, related above, and it is to be noticed in his whole career as a philanthropist. When he entered the field as an opponent of slavery, he took with him every weapon he could handle, and refused to throw away the ballot, as did many of his associates. In an editorial article written in those days he says: "What an absurdity is moral action apart from political!" His pen was consecrated to the cause, and he refused editorial positions that would keep him off the field toward which a sense of duty urged him. In 1835–36, his

friend Thayer was, as we have seen, calling him to Philadelphia to engage in a promising newspaper enterprise. Here is an extract from one of his letters in reply: —

"I should like to be in Philadelphia, — more especially since thee and thy folks are there, but . . . I feel too deep an interest in the struggle now going on between Slavery and Freedom, especially as I have been somewhat active in the cause of Emancipation, and as my *apparent* withdrawal from it might be construed very unfavorably to the cause as well as to myself. I have, I hope, no fanaticism about me; *cant* of all kinds, religious, political, or moral, I abhor. But I regard the contest now going on as of vital interest to the welfare of mankind, not in our country alone, but in all the world. It is a struggle for the rights of man everywhere. In such a cause, I must not *seem* to yield, especially at a time like this, when its advocacy is so unpopular that its abandonment would subject me to the charge of cowardice and insincerity. I must, therefore, with many thanks for thy offer, which under other circumstances might have been most acceptable, decline accepting it. Believe me, I should like to be with you, but I cannot there be entirely free." [1]

[1] Another extract from the letter above quoted, written in midwinter from the old homestead at East Haverhill, shows how his hands were employed in these days when his heart was so fully occupied with philanthropic work. He says, "I live out of the way of the post office, and only see it about once a fortnight. . . . I have been teaming and sledding and feeding my cattle, for

> "From the hens on the roost to the pigs in the sty
> I am lord of the fowl and the brute."

In explanation of Mr. Whittier's frequent assistance to politicians who were not at heart in favor of the cause to which he had consecrated all his powers, it may be said that it was the policy of his life to accept whatever aid he could obtain by indirect as well as by direct methods. He did not expect even from the politicians of his own party the same unselfish devotion to duty which he exacted of himself, and much less did he expect it of others. He took men as he found them, encouraged them to go part way with him, and was not inclined to lose any little advantage to his cause which they might render. This habit of charitable allowances for men who had a capacity for serving a cause he had at heart, even if they sometimes made grave mistakes, is shown in his reply to a friend who was complaining of a party leader who had been accused of wrong-doing. "Has thee found many saints or angels in thy dealings with either political party? Do not expect too much of human nature." He had a genius for coalitions, and could accept assistance from unfriendly sources in furtherance of a philanthropic object. While he did not purchase such aid by an abandonment of principle, he secured it sometimes by appeals to the selfish ambitions of statesmen. His letters to Rantoul and Cushing show his skill in dealing with strong men who were not of his party. Through Rantoul he secured, in 1837, the almost unanimous condemnation of President Van Buren's pro-slavery course from the Massachusetts legislature. Through Cushing he held up the hands of John Quincy Adams in his memorable contest in

Congress for the right of petition. Neither of these objects could have been secured but by the means he adopted. Although one of a small minority, he was often able by his tactics to turn the scale of the great parties in his district and in the State, and secure for the cause of freedom important advantages. It will be seen later how largely he contributed to the election of Charles Sumner to the United States Senate, by holding the anti-slavery vote to a coalition distasteful to many of his followers, which gave to pro-slavery Democrats the governorship of Massachusetts, and the principal state offices. He thought it of the first importance, at that time, to secure a voice for freedom in the Senate, and was willing to give up a great deal to secure it.

Whittier has been called the Laureate of the Liberty party, but it will be found that he did a great deal more than write verse for it. He was active in conventions that inaugurated and shaped the policy of the party, beginning his work for a third party only when all hope of reforming the others had to be given up. If not in personal attendance as a delegate, he wrote letters expressing his views, so as to have a voice in the councils of the party. This brought him into collision with a large number of his friends among the abolitionists, who believed in the policy of abstaining from all political action under a Constitution which they called "a covenant with death and a league with hell," and who spent much time in denouncing churches that failed to do their whole duty to the slave. Whittier's position in regard to this mat-

ter is explained in a letter written to the anti-Texas convention of 1845, in which he said "that though as an abolitionist he was no blind worshiper of the Union, he saw nothing to be gained by an effort, necessarily limited and futile, to dissolve it. The moral and political power requisite for dissolving the Union could far more easily abolish every vestige of slavery."

Though running counter to the teachings of Garrison in this matter, and coming under the censure of his friend, he maintained his position with steadiness. He was ready to go with any party that was marching in his general direction, even if he could not keep step to all its music. He refused to enter into controversy about non-essentials, and thought that the contest into which Garrison led the American Anti-Slavery Society against the Constitution and the church was a waste of strength that had better be applied more directly to the overthrow of the system of slavery. As a Quaker, he had been a "come-outer" all his life, and had learned the art of coming out quietly and in order. Many of the leading abolitionists had recently left Orthodox churches, and were ablaze with the excitement of the act. The Quaker of course did not disapprove of their cutting loose from a church that hampered them, but thought they made an unnecessary fuss about it. They considered it their duty to hammer away not only at the church, but at all abolitionists whose consciences allowed them to remain in the church. Against this spirit Whittier constantly protested, and continued to make his influence felt in politics by questioning

candidates, and supporting only those who pledged themselves to the cause of freedom.

When a state legislature was to be influenced to pass an act or a resolve bearing upon any scheme of philanthropy in which he was interested, Whittier was a most skillful and efficient "lobbyist," in the best sense of that word. Though he served but a single term in the legislature, and after 1837 could not have been elected, yet his was a familiar form in the lobby of the State House for many years. He was a shrewd judge of men, knew how to touch their weak points, and scrupled not to reach their consciences along the line of least resistance. He was by nature and by study a practical politician, never taking the motto, "My party, right or wrong," but rather, "My party in preference to a worse one," or, "My party as I am trying to make it." Wendell Phillips once said of him that he was a superb hand at lobbying. He never worked for any personal advantage, but only for a cause he considered worthy of conscientious effort. His keen sense of the ridiculous kept him from being in the least degree "cranky" in his philanthropy.[1]

[1] Mr. Whittier once related this incident of his early political life in Haverhill: A drunken neighbor of his asked to be taken to the town-house on election day in Mr. Whittier's wagon, promising to vote for Whittier, then a candidate for the legislature, if he could be thus accommodated. As his affiliation had heretofore been with the opposite party, Whittier thought it best to watch him carefully. He could not be prevented from stopping at a liquor saloon on the way, and being already drunk when he started, became difficult to manage upon arrival at the polls. But he was not too drunk to determine to vote against Whittier, whom he tried to shake off. He was, however, started for the ballot-box,

In May, 1836, Mr. Whittier assumed editorial charge of the Haverhill "Gazette," and retired from the position on the 17th of December of the same year. His opposition to Governor Everett led to dissatisfaction among some of the Whig readers of that paper, who did not like the anti-slavery tone he gave to their party organ. The "Gazette" was owned by Jacob Caldwell, husband of Whittier's older sister. To placate the friends of Everett, Mr. Caldwell sold half his interest in the paper to Dr. Jeremiah Spofford, of East Bradford, now Groveland, and it was announced that while Whittier was to edit the literary and poetical departments, Spofford was to be the political editor. Whittier's hand is nevertheless to be seen in many anti-slavery touches in the editorial columns, though Everett was not directly attacked. The following extracts from letters to Spofford show the spirit with which Whittier accepted the situation, and the interest which he still had in the success of the Whig party. He was at this time living in Amesbury, but was considering a plan of buying Caldwell's interest in the "Gazette," and returning to his native town, but his abolitionism proved an insurmountable obstacle.

with the right vote in his hand, and carefully supported by his Quaker neighbor. But at the last moment, an opposition vote was handed him, and Whittier had the mortification to see this deposited in the box. "Did not take the man home, did you?" Mr. Whittier was asked, when he told this story. "Oh yes, I did," he said; "I promised his wife I would see him home safely, and I had to do it. I took him home dead drunk in the bottom of my wagon!"

HAVERHILL, 27th 8th mo., 1836.

Having a proof-sheet of a work I am publishing in Boston [1] to examine and alter, I suppose that nothing will be gained by visiting Bradford, beyond what may be by my writing. I have received a long letter in relation to Governor Everett from one of his personal friends, who says that if the "Gazette" supports him after what I have said, it will surprise and mortify my friends everywhere. On this point I do feel as if it would not do for me to act inconsistently. I should lower myself in my own estimation, and in that of the public. It seems to me that there are many advantages which will result from thy coming in as editor *after* the election. If we bend our whole energies to the Whig cause, if we fill our paper with Whiggism, and resolve to sink or swim with it, why, *if* that cause is unsuccessful, we shall go down with it. If, on the other hand, the paper pursues the even tenor of its way until after the election, on thy coming in it can then, so far as is consistent with principle and truth, govern its course by the circumstances and result of the great struggle. We shall have a meeting here this week to choose delegates to Worcester. I expect Webster will be present and speak on the occasion. I have thought some of thy name as a candidate for elector; probably, however, some Salem man will be designated.

[1] *Mogg Megone.*

Haverhill, 23d of 11th mo., 1836.

Dear Doctor, — I have just learned that a good deal of dissatisfaction exists in this village in regard to my connection with the "Gazette." Many say they will not take the paper so long as I am the editor. They want a thorough-going exclusive Whig press. My aim has been to make the paper as interesting as possible, and at the same time temperately advocate my sentiments on the subject of slavery. In so doing I have had no compensation except $90, and the pay for my expenses in circulating petitions in Essex County. I did not expect to make money; on the contrary, I did not by any means consult my pecuniary interest in the matter. I am attached to Haverhill, and would like to stay here. Of late, however, some of the Whigs have told Caldwell that he must get rid of me, that my abolition made me indifferent as to politics. Caldwell is uneasy about it, but I cannot promise that next year I will go for Everett; on the contrary I must oppose him. Of the two I prefer Marcus Morton. Situated as we are I have been willing to sacrifice many of my feelings, but on this subject I cannot. I have had some idea of buying Caldwell's half myself, but if the Whig leaders are against me I shall hardly have courage to do it, much as I wish to permanently locate myself in this village. I did not before to-day understand that there was any particular opposition to me.

HAVERHILL, 1st of 12th mo., 1836.

DEAR DOCTOR, — I have felt rather unpleasantly about leaving the paper, and could I consistently with what I conceive to be my duty take such a course as would be satisfactory to its patrons, I would do so. . . . In case thee assume the entire control of the editorial department, it is important that it should not be supposed that there is any personal difficulty between ourselves. The truth is, we have always been friends, and I trust we always shall be so. So far as my influence can go, I shall do all I can to procure thy election as a member of the Executive Council this winter. As far as I can judge, few if any of the anti-slavery folks out of town will drop the paper in consequence of my leaving it. Two or three individuals in the village will probably discontinue it. But on the other hand from twenty to thirty will take hold of it. Our anti-slavery folks generally understand thee to be a friend of free discussion, although not an abolitionist, and that is sufficient, provided the paper does not say anything against them. Nothing ought to be said publicly about my being compelled to leave the paper, as it would only irritate some of my friends. For my own part, I shall have it understood, so far as I am able, that it is only a business transaction between my brother-in-law and thyself or others.

In January, 1837, he started for Washington, where John Quincy Adams, assisted by Caleb Cushing, and the entire Massachusetts delegation

in Congress, were battling for the right of petition. His intention was to help them in their preparation for the debates, but when he arrived at Philadelphia he learned that a despotic rule had been passed cutting off debate and annihilating the right of petition. He therefore gave up his intended visit to Washington, and went to Harrisburg, to attend an anti-slavery state convention. Here he met Governor Ritner, "who alone of all the governors of the Union in 1836 met the insulting demands and measures of the South in a manner becoming a freeman," as he says in his preface to his poetical tribute to this independent farmer and high-souled statesman. The poem entitled "Ritner" was written immediately after his return to Boston from Pennsylvania.

Massachusetts had a governor in 1836 who in his inaugural address invoked "the patriotism of all classes to abstain from discussion of the subject of slavery," and to Edward Everett at once Mr. Whittier made indignant reply: "We can neither permit the gag to be thrust in our mouths by others, nor deem it the part of 'patriotism' to place it there ourselves." This letter fills five columns as printed in the "Liberator" of February 20, 1836. Its tone may be judged from this paragraph: —

"Is this the age, are ours the laws, are the sons of the Pilgrims the men, for advice like this? . . . Far fitter is it for the banks of the Bosphorus and the Neva than for those of the Connecticut and the Merrimac. It is not suited to our hard-handed artisans and free farmers. . . . They have

seen demands gravely made by slaveholding legislatures and governors upon the authorities of free and sovereign States for the delivery of their fellow-citizens to torture and death, and for the passage of laws against the liberty of speech and of the press. By things like these has the Northern laborer been summoned to discussion."

In reply to Governor Everett's statement that the framers of the Constitution provided for the perpetuity of the institution of slavery, he quotes passages from Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, and others, to show that they looked for its speedy extinction. Then comes this memorable passage:

"George Washington was another signer of the Constitution. I know that he was a slaveholder; and I have not forgotten the emotions which swelled my bosom, when in the metropolis of New England, the Cradle of Liberty, a degenerate son[1] of the Pilgrims pointed to his portrait, which adorns the wall, with the thrice-repeated exclamation, 'That slaveholder!' I saw the only blot on the otherwise bright and spotless character of the Father of his Country held to open view, exposed by remorseless hands to sanction a system of oppression and blood. It seemed to me like sacrilege. I looked upon those venerable and awful features, while the echoes, once wakened in that old Hall by the voice of ancient Liberty, warm from the lips of Adams and Hancock and the fiery heart of James Otis, gave back from wall and gallery the exulting cry of 'Slaveholder,' half expecting to see the still canvas darken with a frown, and the pic-

[1] Peleg Sprague.

tured lips part asunder with words of rebuke and sorrow.[1] I felt it, as did hundreds more on that occasion, to be a reproach and a cruel insult to the memory of the illustrious dead. Did not the speaker know that the dying testimony of Washington was against slavery?"

Mr. Whittier took occasion, while commenting upon the message, to refer with cutting severity to some pro-slavery utterances which Everett had made while he was in Congress. The boldness and spirit of the letter attracted much attention, and the governor was greatly annoyed by it. Until they met in the electoral college, in 1864, Everett did not again encounter his unwelcome correspondent. On that occasion he came up cordially to Whittier, and expressed his pleasure that at last they were agreed.

The whole month of March, 1837, Mr. Whittier spent in Boston in work among the members of the legislature, to secure the passage of acts and resolves to show that Massachusetts did not respond favorably to the inaugural address of President Van Buren. This message, by its tone of subserviency to the South, created great indignation

[1] The famous sentence of Wendell Phillips, "I thought those pictured lips would have broken into voice, to rebuke the recreant American," was clearly plagiarized, says Kennedy, by an unconscious act of memory, from the above eloquent passage by Whittier, written nearly two years previous to the Faneuil Hall speech by Phillips. Young Phillips had been mightily aroused by the Garrison mob, some months before the date of Whittier's open letter to Everett, and had resolved to devote his life to the cause of Freedom. He had undoubtedly, therefore, read Whittier's strong and manly letter to the governor, and remembered, dimly, the passage in question.

throughout the North, wherever the abolitionists had been educating the consciences of the people. Whittier saw the opportunity to commit the State to anti-slavery action, and promptly made the effort. On the last day of March he wrote to his friend Thayer: —

"Just look at old Massachusetts! The legislature is abolitionized, the whole State is coming. For the last four weeks I have been in Boston, aiding and abetting in the plan of tumbling our six hundred representatives off the fence upon the abolition side. We have caucused in season and out of season, threatened and coaxed, plead and scolded, until we 've got the day. The Van Buren men are persuaded to look to the people of Massachusetts, and not to orders from Washington. And they have done as we advised: to save themselves they have joined hands with the abolitionists. . . . We shall get a bill through, moreover, granting a jury trial for fugitive slaves. Rantoul, the Van Buren leader, will make a great effort for it. Among those who have been 'taking care' of the legislature with myself, I would mention Gardner B. Perry, Dr. Farnsworth of Groton, George Bancroft of Springfield, and a number of other abolitionists."

The "orders from Washington," to which reference is made in this letter, were contained in the inaugural address, in which the President announces that he is "an uncompromising opponent of every attempt on the part of Congress to abolish slavery, in the District of Columbia, against the wishes of the slaveholding States," and calls for a

cessation of discussion about the matter. The Boston papers of both parties opposed the introduction of the resolves favoring the rights of petition and the abolition of slavery in the District; but, in spite of them, Whittier and his little band of abolitionists secured a unanimous vote of the Massachusetts Senate in favor of the resolutions, and there were only sixteen who voted against them in the House. The Boston "Atlas" of the day complainingly says that John G. Whittier, the Quaker poet, and others whom it names, "were indiscriminately mingled with the members in the Representatives' Hall during the whole debate." The journals that had been angered by the introduction of the resolves were silenced by the unanimity of the vote. The bill securing jury trial for runaway slaves was passed by both Houses with scarcely a dissenting voice. It was while Mr. Whittier was engaged in influencing the legislature to pass the acts and resolves to which reference has just been made, that he wrote the following letter to his friend Robert Rantoul, Jr., the Democratic leader in the House of Representatives. It was written from No. 1 Pitts Street, Boston, on the 13th of March, 1837: —

"I am fearful that I am troubling thee too often with the question of slavery, but the deep interest I feel must be my excuse. To thee, as to a friend, I have spoken freely. I am certain that the resolutions [favoring the right of petition and the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia] would pass even without thy aid. But, if they did so, there would be a *party* aspect given to the mat-

ter, which I should regret exceedingly. It would insure, I fear, the reëlection of Edward Everett, as long as he pleased to occupy the Chair of State, and upon thyself, as far as Massachusetts or New England is concerned, the effect would be injurious. No party in the country is now so thoroughly organized and so united as the Abolitionist. Asking nothing for themselves, and contending only for great principles, under the impulse of duty, there is nothing but harmony and unison among them. They move in a mass, and that without concert, because they are governed, under all circumstances, by the same principles of action. So long as they remain thus they are invincible.

"It does seem to me that the present responsibility of thyself in this matter is very great. Thy talents, eloquence, and thus far steady devotion to equal rights, thy influence almost unbounded with the administrative party of the State, all combine to render thy decision, whatever it may be, of no trifling importance. Whatever may be thought of it now, the present is a crisis in the affairs of this State. Thy course on this question will be a matter of history. Never since Patrick Henry electrified the Assembly of Virginia has there been a nobler opportunity for advancing the cause of righteous liberty. What are the paltry offices which men contend for, which the vile, the imbecile, the sordid struggle for, as the *reward* of partisan fraud and management, to that which is received from a grateful, intelligent, and virtuous people, not for services rendered to themselves,

but for those rendered to the cause of pure democracy, humanity, and truth! In coming years the greenest wreath in the memory of Jefferson will be the record of his sentiments on the subject of slavery. I know that thy own sentiments are similar to those of Jefferson. I feel assured that slavery, in any form, is odious to thy feelings. Why not, then, say so; carry out thy democratic principles, and insure the approbation of the wise and good, throughout the world, and for all time; nay more, secure that self-approval, that answer of a good conscience, which, when the exciting ambitions and hopes of the partisan are lost, in the hour of sickness, and in the decline of life, will be dearer than any earthly honor. Never had any one a more excellent opportunity of doing honor to himself and to the cause of republican liberty than thyself at this time. It would prove to the people of Massachusetts that thy democracy is not a partial and time-serving principle, but radical and based upon the equality of the human family, and zealous for the rights of all classes. In a word, it would prove that to be a friend of the policy and principles of Mr. Van Buren, as regards other matters, does not necessarily imply a slavish acquiescence in his extraordinary views on the subject of liberty and slavery. It would win the respect and command the admiration of all parties. It would *disappoint* thy enemies; it would increase the esteem of all thy present friends, and add to their number. It would do much for the cause of humanity, and truth, and justice. May we not hope that it will be done? Excuse the lib-

erty I have taken, and believe me cordially thy friend, JOHN G. WHITTIER.

P. S. Ill health prevents me from getting out much in the evening; will it be in thy power to call at this place to-morrow evening?

The poems written by Mr. Whittier during the first years of his anti-slavery work, from 1833 to 1837, were with few exceptions devoted to the cause he had so warmly espoused. They were published in the "Liberator," the Boston "Courier," the "Anti-Slavery Reporter," the "New England Magazine," and the Haverhill "Gazette." They include "Toussaint L'Ouverture," "The Yankee Girl," "Our Fellow Countrymen in Chains," "The Hunters of Men," "Song of the Free," "Is This the Land Our Fathers loved," "Ritner," "O Thou Whose Presence went before," and several poems not to be found in any collection of his works. In the "Liberator" of September 3, 1836, is a poem of his "To the Daughters of James Forten," beginning: —

"Sisters! the vain and proud may pass you by."

The poem "Mogg Megone" belongs to this period. It was published originally in the "New England Magazine," in the numbers for March and April, 1835, and Mr. Whittier never tried so persistently and unsuccessfully to suppress any other poem. In the edition of 1888 he succeeded in relegating it to the appendix. He began writing it while at home, in the spring of 1830, and laid it aside when he went to Hartford to edit the "Review." The

finishing touches were given to it in 1834, while he was managing his farm at Haverhill, and busying himself with the politics of his county. It probably would not have been finished but for material which came to his hand in two books of history[1] published after some lines of it had been written. "Mogg Megone" was the first bound volume, exclusively of verse, ever issued by Whittier. It was published in 1836, by Messrs. Light & Stevens, Cornhill, Boston, making a tiny book of sixty-nine pages, 24mo. It was so very modest in its size that it seems to have escaped the attention of reviewers for several months after its publication. But the "North American Review" for April, 1837, contains an appreciative notice from the pen of Professor C. C. Felton, which concludes with these words: "He has in various forms displayed his power, and if he will choose a less revolting theme, and construct his fable skillfully, and give to the execution all the finish of which he is capable, he will make a poem that shall live."

In a letter to Lucy Hooper, written in August, 1837, Mr. Whittier says: "I send thee a copy of 'Mogg Megone.' I was unable to finish it as I could have wished. It is, in my mind, liable to one grave objection. It is not, I fear, calculated to do good. But a small edition, however, was printed, and it is some satisfaction to believe that it cannot do much evil. The 'North Ameri-

[1] These were Folsom's *History of Saco and Biddeford*, and Williamson's *History of Maine*, published respectively in 1830 and 1832.

can Review,' I understand, gave a very favorable notice of it."

In 1837, he spent a few months in New York, acting as one of the secretaries of the American Anti-Slavery Society. He also occasionally wrote for Joshua Leavitt's "Emancipator." He occupied a room in which James G. Birney, Theodore D. Weld, Elizur Wright, Henry B. Stanton, and Joshua Leavitt had desks. The editing of the "Emancipator" and the "Anti-Slavery Reporter" was but a small part of their work. They wrote personal appeals to public men, distributed petitions to Congress against the interstate slave trade, in favor of freedom in the District of Columbia, and in opposition to the annexation of Texas. They wrote tracts, operated an "underground railroad" for fugitive slaves, and employed lecturers. There were several wealthy men like Gerrit Smith, Lewis and Arthur Tappan, and Joseph Sturge of England, who supplied a large part of the needed funds. Weld and Stanton were brilliant orators; Birney, the candidate of the Liberty party for the Presidency, wrote long and elaborate letters and essays; Elizur Wright and Leavitt were writers of sharp and pungent editorials; Whittier was sagacious in counsel, and was occasionally inspired to write a poem that electrified the North. The state of his health did not allow him to keep regular office hours, but he came and went as he pleased, boarding in Brooklyn, and crossing the ferry to reach the office on Nassau Street. Mr. Weld says that Whittier and he were much together in those days, and held long

discussions upon themes in which they were both interested. One summer evening, at about nine o'clock, they went up to the balcony over the entrance to the New York City Hall, and the topic under discussion was so interesting to them both that they paid no heed to the great clock that tolled the hours over their head, and it was nearly daylight before it had occurred to them that it was time to seek their homes.

TO ELIZABETH H. WHITTIER.

NEWPORT, 6th mo. 14, 1837.

Thee hardly expected to hear from me at this place; certainly I did not expect to be here when I left Amesbury. On reaching Boston, I found none of the Portland people at the convention, and after waiting a week in Boston I received a letter from General [James] Appleton, stating that, owing to the present pecuniary embarrassments, it was impossible to obtain a sufficient number of subscribers to warrant the undertaking of a paper in Portland at present. Thus situated, I came on to the Yearly Meeting, and agreeably to the request of Professor [Elizur] Wright, I shall spend two or three months with him as one of the corresponding secretaries of the American Anti-Slavery Society, after which time there will probably be an opening for me in Portland or Philadelphia. I shall leave to-day or to-morrow for New York, and on arriving there will take an early opportunity to write more fully. The Yearly Meeting, at the suggestion of some Philadelphia Friends, has concluded to shut our

meeting-houses against anti-slavery lecturers. I regret the step exceedingly. Sarah M. and Angelina E. Grimké are now in Boston. Next week they go to Lynn and Salem, and next to Ipswich, Newburyport and Amesbury. They are excellent speakers, and cannot fail to make a good impression wherever they go.

TO THE SAME.

NEW YORK, 4th of 7th mo., 1837.

I have now been in this city between two and three weeks, and shall perhaps stay here three weeks longer, or more. My paper will not start in Maine until the Ninth month, if it does then,[1] and I have some doubts about its agreeing with me to write very steadily, as since the warm weather I have been troubled with my old complaint of palpitation. I am lounging away my time here, not closely applying myself to anything, overseeing the sending out of petitions.

There had been a division in the ranks of the abolitionists, and the "new organization," which included Whittier, the Tappans, J. G. Birney, Samuel E. Sewall, H. B. Stanton, Joshua Leavitt, Amos A. Phelps, and Gerrit Smith, favored political action, while Garrison, and those who adhered to him, refused to recognize the possibility of attaining their end without the overthrow of the

[1] The plan of starting an anti-slavery paper in Portland, which he was to edit, was given up because of business troubles in Maine growing out of ruinous land speculations, which made it an unpropitious time for beginning the publication of such a paper.

Constitution. From first to last, as we have said, Whittier never wavered in his determination to fight slavery at the ballot-box, and he considered it useless waste of strength to tug at the pillars of the Union, and attempt to overthrow the church or to carry along reforms for which the time was not yet ripe. To the criticism he received from his friends of the "old organization" he made temperate and good-natured replies, reserving all his sharpest arrows for the common enemy.

It was in 1837 that he wrote "The Pastoral Letter," called out by the action of an association of clergymen which met at Brookfield, Mass., and issued a letter to the churches warning them against discussions of "agitating and perplexing subjects," and especially against the mission of the South Carolina sisters Grimké, which "threatens the female character with widespread and permanent injury."

In 1837, John Quincy Adams wrote a series of remarkable letters to his constituents, telling the whole story of his great fight in Congress for the right of petition. These letters were published in the Quincy "Patriot," which had a small circulation, limited to his Congressional district. As Adams at this time belonged to neither of the great parties that divided the country, none of the party organs copied these letters, the spirit and brilliancy of which would have insured their appearance in every leading journal of the country if the journalistic enterprise of the present time had prevailed in those days. The friends of liberty were not willing that this record of a splendid forensic con-

test should be thus smothered. It was decided to publish the letters in a pamphlet for general circulation, and Mr. Whittier was called upon to edit them. He went to Quincy and conferred with Mr. Adams, who was glad to have added publicity given to what he justly regarded as the crowning work of his long and useful life. The pamphlet was published by Isaac Knapp, of Boston, and its pages cannot be read even now without such a thrill as the highest eloquence and most pungent satire impart to sympathetic nerves.

In the same year he edited a work entitled "Views of Slavery and Emancipation, from Harriet Martineau's *Society in America*."

In the following letter to the sisters Grimké, Whittier states his grounds of opposition to the course of several speakers sent out by the society, who could not refrain from airing their views on other themes beside that which they were employed to consider. He feared that the pastoral letter aimed at them might induce the sisters to make a crusade against the churches.

My dear Sisters, — I have been waiting for an opportunity to answer the letter which has been so kindly sent me [probably a letter censuring his course in opposing the attitude of Wright and Garrison]. . . . The more I reflect on the subject, the more difficulty I find, and the more decidedly am I of the opinion that we ought to hold all these matters aloof from the cause of abolition. Our good friend, H. C. Wright, with the best intentions, is doing great injury by a different course. He is making the anti-slavery party responsible in

a great degree for his, to say the least, startling opinions. I do not censure him for them, although I cannot subscribe to them. . . . Those who subscribe money to the anti-slavery society do it in the belief that it will be spent in the propagation, not of Quakerism or Presbyterianism, but of the doctrine of immediate emancipation. To employ an agent who devotes half his time to the propagation of no human or family government doctrines, in connection — intimate connection — with the doctrine of abolition, is a fraud upon the patrons of the cause. Just so with papers. Brother Garrison errs, I think, in this respect. He takes the no church and no human government ground, as for instance, in his Providence speech. Now in his prospectus he engaged to give his subscribers an anti-slavery paper, and his subscribers made their contract with him on that ground.

It was in the summer of 1837, while residing in New York, that Mr. Whittier made the acquaintance of Lucy Hooper, who was then only twenty years of age. She was a native of Essex County, and was at that time living with her parents in Brooklyn. Mr. Whittier had a boarding-place in the same city, and was a frequent visitor at the house of the Hoopers. He encouraged the literary ambition of the charming young poetess, who had already published many verses, and who was considering the advisability of collecting them in a book. The next year, when Mr. Whittier was editing the "Pennsylvania Freeman," he called for and received occasional

poems from her. It was in 1839 that one August afternoon he walked with her by the river of their childhood, an event commemorated in the elegy he wrote on the occasion of her death in 1841.

TO LUCY HOOPER.

NEW YORK, 8th mo. 21, 1837.

In perusing some of thy brief and fugitive pieces of poetry, I have been impressed with the belief that it is in thy power to write a poem of some considerable length, which would be worth infinitely more to thee and to the literature of the country than all the hurried sketches and "bits of poetry" which thou and myself and a score of others who might be named have ever written. The truth is, the "small craft" of poetry in which we have indulged ourselves is not fitted for the voyage of Immortality. We shall perish, and verily *our works will follow us.* The hearts which now know us and love us will also soon cease to beat, and with them our very memories will die. The utilitarian of the twentieth century will not heed whether, in treading on our graves, he shakes the dust of prose or poetry from his feet. And after all what matters it? Who cares for the opinions of the twentieth century? Not I, for one. But we *do* all care for the opinions of the good and the wise and the pure-hearted around us! If we strive for fame, or riches, or honor, it is because we wish to share their smile with the friends whom we love, and in the matter of poetry, a poetical reputation.

If we write at all, why not use our talents to the best advantage? Why not write a poem upon which we can concentrate all our powers? I have long thought of doing this myself, but I have nearly abandoned the idea. An accumulating pressure of other matters compels me to forego the undertaking. But what should hinder thee from doing it? Nothing that I can conceive of.

I send thee with this a poem by Mrs. Maria G. Brooks, a Massachusetts lady. The poem ["Zophiel, or the Bride of Seven"] was written, I believe, in the West Indies. It has been republished in fine style in England, edited by, and under the sanction of Southey. There are some very exquisite passages, but as a whole the poem is defective in plot, and full of weaknesses and hard, ungraceful rhyme. Yet the true gems in it are none the less conspicuous for the foil of bad taste and the lack of general interest.

Now I do not wish to flatter thee; first, because I should despise myself for the meanness of the attempt, and second, because I know that by so doing I should deservedly forfeit thy esteem. But in perfect sincerity allow me to say that I believe thee able to produce within six months of this time a poem which would be received with general commendation on both sides of the Atlantic. Pray think of it! I wish very much to have the pleasure of the walk proposed so long since, but fear I shall not find leisure before I go to New England. I will try, however, and call again before I leave.

TO THE SAME.

Boston, 8th mo. 27, 1837.

I did not receive thy note until after my return from Brooklyn the other day, or I should have alluded to it when I saw thee. I did not wish to throw any obstacle in the way of thy publishing thy fugitive poems, but simply to suggest the expediency of deferring their publication until thou couldst have time for the completion of a longer and more elaborate poem. I know it would require a good deal of patient perseverance and severe intellectual toil; and for myself I frankly confess that I have not resolution to attempt anything of the kind. Besides, unless consecrated to the sacred interests of religion and humanity, it would be a criminal waste of life, and abuse of the powers which God has given for his own glory and the welfare of the world. Mere intellectual renown is valueless. Do the best that we can, in the matter of intellect, the devil is wiser than any of us. The humblest and weakest follower of the meek and lowly Redeemer is more to be envied than a Voltaire, a Rousseau, or a Byron, and the lowliest teacher of that sublime philosophy which "the wisdom of the world accounteth foolishness" is wiser and better than the prodigies of intellect, whose learning and acquirements only enable them, in the words of another, "*sapienter descendere ad infernum.*"

Shouldst thou conclude to publish a small and select volume of thy poems, I have no doubt of their success. They are better than a great proportion of Mrs. ——'s, although the *sentiment* and

the *moral* are not always so good as hers, in a religious point of view. There is an originality and a freshness of poetic feeling in them which cannot be found in Mrs. ——'s writings. She says, besides, a great deal too much of "babies," "dead infants," "sick infants," "sleeping infants," "smiling infants," infants *ad infinitum*, so that her book might not be inaptly termed "The Chronicles of the Nursery." This no doubt results from the fact that her affections have all been forced into one channel. If I can do anything to promote the publication of thy poems, I herewith cheerfully, and grateful for the opportunity of so doing, tender my services. Please write me thy intention.

For the coming fortnight I shall probably be at Amesbury, and should be happy to hear from thee at any time. My health has suffered from my residence in New York,— a place which, with all due deference to thyself, I must consider unfit for Christian, or heathen even, to dwell in. The present is a favorable time, in some respects, to publish. There are few new books in the market. Remember me kindly to thy sisters, mother, and brother, and believe me, very sincerely thy friend.

In 1837, while Mr. Whittier was in New York, Isaac Knapp, of Boston, publisher of the "Liberator," without consulting him, published a volume of over one hundred pages, entitled "Poems written during the Progress of the Abolition Question in the United States, between the years 1830 and 1838. By John G. Whittier." This was the first collection of Whittier's poems ever published.

CHAPTER VI.

EDITORIAL WORK IN PHILADELPHIA.

1837–1840.

The political and in a measure the literary interests of Mr. Whittier had made the editorial occupation a natural one, and but for family reasons he might have continued in it. His devotion to the anti-slavery cause led to his return to this work. Late in the autumn of 1837, he heeded a call to Philadelphia, and went to the assistance of the venerable anti-slavery pioneer, Benjamin Lundy, who was editing the "National Enquirer." In March, 1838, Lundy, worn out in the cause to which he had devoted his life, retired from the management of the paper, the name of which was changed to "Pennsylvania Freeman," and in the issue of March 15 Whittier pledged the entire devotion of his energies to the cause of Universal Freedom, as he became the responsible editor.

In Philadelphia, Mr. Whittier made his home again with his good Haverhill friends, the Thayers, and among the Quakers found congenial companionship in many families; one of his steadfast friends was John Dickinson, father of Anna E. Dickinson, who in later years became celebrated as a public speaker, and of Susan E. Dickinson, well known as a writer. The last-named daughter

contributes these reminiscences of Whittier's Philadelphia life : —

"I saw him once, when, a young child clinging to my mother's hand on the way home from Twelfth Street meeting, she said to me, 'Look at the young man walking with thy father; that is the poet, John G. Whittier.' Young as I was I knew his name; for I had heard from her lips already the story of how some years before she had rushed bareheaded from her home on Arch Street, near Third, up to Sixth Street, as the fire bells clanged out, and the word came that Pennsylvania Hall was mobbed and on fire; and but half an hour before her husband had left her to join Whittier and Thomas Shipley and a few other faithful ones, for the first meeting there after the dedication. She told how calm and quiet Whittier was *outwardly*, looking on at the destruction of the hall, his office, and his books and his papers, and how helpful to others in the rush of the mob and the whirl of the flames. The late Edward M. Davis, son-in-law of Lucretia Mott, once wrote to me that it was difficult to give many incidents of Whittier's life in Philadelphia; he went so little into social circles, was so quiet, doing steadfast and indefatigable work on the paper, and on committees; a great amount of writing, but very little public speaking; his work was far more prominent than he was. Mr. Whittier himself told me, in 1867, that my father and he went to Harrisburg as delegates to form the state anti-slavery society, and that he was one of the committee that drafted the constitution of the society. The time at which

I mentioned first seeing him must have been when he stopped for two or three days on his return from Washington, whither he was sent in 1845 as one of the commissioners to present the remonstrance of Massachusetts against the annexation of Texas. Perhaps the dark, spirituelle beauty of his face which stamped itself on my childish memory was made clearer by the likeness (a daguerreotype) of him sent to one of my Western schoolmates a few years later, and which kindled the enthusiasm of all the pupils over him into flame. Two of my classmates there were the daughters of Joseph Healy, who did most of the anti-slavery printing and publishing in Philadelphia for years; and one of my most treasured possessions is the little paper-covered revised edition of 'Moll Pitcher and the Minstrel Girl,' presented by one of them. Among the young women to whom we girls looked up with interest and admiration in those days was Elizabeth Lloyd, Jr., author of many beautiful poems,[1] and there was a special glamour attached to her because she was understood to be one of the very few with whom Whittier was really on terms of warm personal friendship, outside of his firm and faithful comradeship with his anti-slavery friends. My father died suddenly but a few weeks after the time when he and Whittier walked from meeting together, which explains why I can tell nothing from the lips of the friend who was so dear to him."

Some of the Philadelphia Friends, who were

[1] The best known of these is *Milton on his Blindness.*

accustomed to hear the voices of women raised in their meetings, objected to the appearance on the anti-slavery platform of several young women who had trained themselves for public speaking in a lyceum of their own; and one of the young women wittily said that the conservative Friends believed that Paul meant to say that women were bound to keep silence *except* in the churches! In those days Mr. Whittier was accustomed in a humorous vein to discourage the would-be feminine orators; his real attitude is set forth in this letter to Elizabeth Neall: —

TO ELIZABETH NEALL.

1839.

For myself, abolition has been to me its own "exceeding great reward." It has repaid every sacrifice of time, of money, of reputation, of health, of ease, with the answer of a good conscience, and the happiness which grows out of benevolent exertions for the welfare of others. It has led me to examine myself. It has given me the acquaintance of some of the noblest and best of men and women. *It owes me nothing.* So, then, two of the youngest members of the Women's Society are to hold forth. . . . Shade of the Apostle Paul! What is this world coming to? Never mind, "I like it hugely," as Tristram Shandy said of Yorick's sermon, and would like it better to see them wield in their delicate fingers the thunderbolts of abolition oratory. As the author of John Gilpin said of the hero and his horse,

"And when he next doth ride abroad,
May I be there to see!"

Seriously, I see no good reason why they should not speak as well as their elders. "Let the daughters prophesy," agreeably to the promise of the prophet Joel, and let the doors be thrown open to all without distinction of sex, and then another part of the promise will be verified, — "the young men shall see visions"! I go the whole length as regards the rights of women, however, although I sometimes joke a little about it. I am afraid it is a besetting sin of mine to do so in reference to many things in which I feel a sober and real interest. I have repented of it a thousand times, especially as it gave those who were not intimately acquainted with me a false idea of my character. . . .

Of his life in Philadelphia, his cousin, Ann E. Wendell, contributes these reminiscences: —

"I can recall but little of Greenleaf's first visit to us in the winter of 1836–1837, but the picture of the first evening is very vivid. I remember his dignified entrance, his dress a light overcoat and a sealskin cap, — there my memory of that evening closes; but that he was in a genial mood, ready to enjoy what came, I judge from his accepting an invitation from my brother Isaac to visit him at his home ten miles out of town, and to take with him my sister Margaret and my little brother Evert. The winter was very cold, and the sleighing good, so they were to go in a sleigh. Greenleaf became much interested in telling Margaret some interesting story, and the result was an upset in a snow-drift, which was a source

of much merriment then and afterward. He came several times, talked a good deal, and was very entertaining. I cannot now recollect much of his conversation, except what he said of his fear of ghosts, and his dread of passing the grave-yard. We did not see him again until 1838, when he came to edit the 'Pennsylvania Freeman.' He was with us a good deal during the next winter. I think the portrait of him by Bass Otis was painted at about this time, and not in 1836. I recollect sitting on a sofa and holding this portrait before Joseph Sturge for his inspection, and his remark, 'John, I do not quite like it.' I do not recollect the objection. I always fancied there was a similarity in a smile in all the portraits by Otis, and perhaps he saw it did not look quite natural. But the position was lifelike. Otis placed him at the table, turned his attention to something else, and then addressed him a little suddenly with, 'Mr. Whittier!' When Greenleaf started up to respond, he said, 'Keep that position,' and he was so taken.[1] . . . Joseph Healy at that time lived on Seventh Street, and his house was a gathering-place for the abolitionists. Green-

[1] It was after this painting that the engraving in the first volume of the edition of 1888 was executed. A few years after this portrait was painted, the ladies of Philadelphia had an anti-slavery bazaar, and wished to have an engraving of it made by Sartain to be sold at the fair. One of them wrote to Mr. Whittier, asking his permission, and this was his reply: "I have no great fancy for having my face made use of in the manner thee suggests; but if it will be of any service to the bazaar it would perhaps be foolish to object to it. My *heart* has been too long devoted to the good cause in which you are laboring to allow me to withhold my *head* when it is needed."

leaf was there a good deal, but I think he boarded with his old friend and townsman, A. W. Thayer. Abolitionism at that time was so blended with transcendentalism and ultra-liberalism, in both the social and religious point of view, that the Orthodox Friends of Philadelphia, although fully believing in the right of abolition, were very shy of joining in the public movements of the abolitionists. This threw Greenleaf almost entirely with the Hicksite division of the society, and he being always retiring did not soon make many personal acquaintances on our side, although he belonged to the Orthodox division.

"When Pennsylvania Hall was burned we lived on the same street, six or seven squares from it. Greenleaf did not come to see us that night, as he was in the midst of the crowd at the fire. There were other riots about that time. One evening the mob attacked a colored institution not far from us, and the police were ordered there. They came, a line of men reaching from one side to the other of the street, and stopped in front of our house. Another line came, another and another, until they formed a solid square of men. At a given signal all sprang their rattles together, and marched down to the scene of trouble.

"One incident I recall, of 1838. My sister Margaret entertained a small company at our house, and the amusement of the evening was taking profiles on the wall, from the shadow cast upon a paper pinned upon it. I have kept Greenleaf's until this time, and not long ago pasted it on black cloth and had it photographed. It is like

the old-fashioned silhouettes, and I think it a perfect likeness. I prize it for the curiosity of its origin. When the last collection of his works was made, I asked him if he wanted this likeness engraved; but he wrote to me he had a side face taken[1] by William Gray's grand-daughter. I suspect he thought it would be a rather ridiculous affair, but I don't think it is.

"Greenleaf was with us a great deal during the next two or three years. I very rarely went from home, and was much confined to the sofa. In the evening, the centre table was rolled to the sofa so that I could enjoy the light. Greenleaf often came home very weary, and seated himself at the table, looking as though he felt there was nothing more to do, and both body and soul could rest. That memory makes the picture taken from Miss Gray's photograph valuable to me, as it looks as he did at such times, although William J. Allinson said it looked as though he had never received the breath of life.

"He was very uncertain; we could never make an engagement and be sure he would be with us. Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward, in the 'Century,' describes our experience exactly. He did not like little companies, where he would be an object of particular interest. On one occasion he did, I think, intend to be present, and then gave up the intention; but knowing how much sister Margaret would be disappointed, he sent the following lines: —

[1] The picture in the fourth volume.

'To cousin Margaret Wendell, greeting:
This may inform thee that to-night
There 'll be an anti-slavery meeting,
To set the world and so forth right!
And I, bear witness all slaveholders,
Must hold therein a lofty station —
A moral Atlas on whose shoulders
Shall rest the ark of reformation.
And therefore, cousin Margaret, seeing
My present duty — pardon me!
Since nothing but the *world's* well-being
Shall keep me, dearest coz, from *thee.*

'12th mo., 12th, 1839.'

"The poem 'To a Friend on her Return from Europe' was addressed to Elizabeth Neall [Mrs. Sidney Howard Gay]. The lines, in the edition of 1838, 'In the Commonplace Book of a Young Lady' were written for my sister Margaret, at least the prelude was. 'The Quaker of Olden Time' and the poem 'The Relic' were written at our house in Philadelphia in 1839. In the winter of 1840, Mr. Whittier edited a small collection of poems for an anti-slavery fair, entitled 'The North Star.' The poems were contributed by friends interested in the cause; among them were John Quincy Adams, James T. Fields, Lucy Hooper, John Pierpont, Greenleaf, and his sister Elizabeth.[1] . . . It was his intention at that time to go to the World's Convention held in London the next summer, and we did not know his reason for remaining at home, although aware that he was ill during the winter."

The following incident of Mr. Whittier's resi-

[1] Whittier's own contributions to the collection were *The Exiles* and *The World's Convention.*

dence in Philadelphia is told by Mr. Edwin H. Coates, who was one of a committee of twelve persons organized in 1834, and acting with a still larger association, for the purpose of aiding fugitives from slavery. One member of this committee was John P. Burr, a natural son of Aaron Burr. Mr. Coates says that when Mr. Whittier took up his residence in Philadelphia he came to him to learn the workings of the "underground railroad": —

"Like all of us he learned that the great secret of our success was to be cautious, discerning, and *never to make a mistake.* A mistake, a blunder, meant the penitentiary, and years of painful imprisonment. A Virginia slave named Douglass applied to the committee for help to get his wife and children into a free State. We dispatched an agent to Baltimore to consult with the vigilance committee there, and finally a letter was sent to the family by an efficient female agent by the name of Butler, who worked her plans and ours so well that in a short time the little party landed in Philadelphia. At eleven o'clock that night there came to my house a consequential-looking individual who handed me a copy of the Washington 'Globe,' at the same time pointing to an advertisement containing a reward for the recovery of the runaways, and a full description of each one. As may well be imagined, I began to grow alarmed. So as soon as this person had withdrawn, I started for the residence of Whittier, and was closeted with him for an hour. A conviction for complicity in this scheme meant personal

injury, or at least imprisonment for a long and indefinite term. Without coming to any conclusion as to the best course to pursue I went home and to bed. I know I kept looking at the penitentiary with one eye and on the God of the oppressed with the other. But it providentially turned out all right, and I had the unspeakable pleasure of soon meeting the family in a secure place and shaking hands with them all. I then with joy rushed to Whittier's house, at the still hour of midnight, and called my anxious friend out of bed. From the room below I cried, 'Whittier! Whittier! the Douglass family is safe!' From his chamber came the exclamation: 'Glory! Hallelujah!' — and this is the first time I remember hearing a Quaker shout. But he did, and it came from his very soul. We soon had barbers and dressmakers and others to assist in changing the personal appearance and effecting a complete disguise of the determined slaves, and when they left that house, with their wigs, strange clothes, and other changes, they could not have been recognized as the same party who entered it."

In May, 1838, Mr. Whittier, accompanied by his cousin, Joseph Cartland, visited Joseph Healy's place in Bucks County, and in a letter from there to a friend he says in regard to the divisions in the Society of Friends: —

"Here as everywhere else in Bucks County, the 'heretics' [Hicksites] have the ascendency in point of numbers, and I fear that even those who have in some degree maintained their integrity have not always given evidence of soundness in *all*

respects. . . . What will it avail us if, while boasting of our soundness and of our enmity to the delusion of Hicksism, we neglect to make a practical application of our belief to ourselves? if we neglect to seek for ourselves that precious atonement which we are so ready to argue in favor of? I do not undervalue a sound belief. The truth should be held, but at the same time I believe it may be 'held' in unrighteousness. I do not dare to claim to be any the better for my orthodox principles. The mercy of God is my only hope. . . . I cannot forbear to mention one fact which has come under my notice, as showing that prejudice against color is not confined to human bipeds. A hen at this place has disowned two of a fine brood of chickens who happen to be black! Let this be communicated to Elliott Cresson [an agent of the Colonization Society]."

Notwithstanding his well-known abolition sentiments, Mr. Whittier was invited to contribute to the first number of the "Democratic Review," published at Washington, October, 1837. His poem "Palestine" appeared in that number, which also contained William Cullen Bryant's "The Battle-Field." To the second number he contributed "The Familist's Hymn," and thereafter for nearly ten years he sent to the "Review" most of his best work.

Busy as Mr. Whittier was with his work in the fields of philanthropy and reform, while in Philadelphia, he then laid a plan that the state of his health did not permit him to execute, for a literary undertaking of considerable magnitude, the exact

nature of which cannot now be known. But among his papers is found a letter from an intimate literary friend of his which gives some hint of it. This friend writes: —

"I am delighted with thy idea; thou givest form and substance to a vague desire of seeing something like a corner-stone laid for a Quaker temple of literature. Thou art the man to undertake it. . . . I have never seen the Wordsworth sonnets alluded to, but will look at them to understand thy plan. Thy idea only needs the setting of J. G. Whittier's poetry to make it the richest jewel in his crown of fame. But I would have thee lay it by, uncut and unpolished, till restored health and the quiet occupation of a home life will allow thee to work upon it, without paying the price which has been the penalty of too many of thy literary labors."

Slave-hunters were often following their prey into Pennsylvania in those days, and many instances are given in the newspapers of the time of free colored people being kidnapped and taken to the Southern States, either without giving them a chance to prove their right to freedom in the courts, or by false swearing as to their identity. Mr. Whittier called attention, in the following paragraph in the "Freeman," to what he properly called "a desecration of the Hall of Independence": —

"It may not be generally known to our readers that the building in which our National Independence was first proclaimed is not unfrequently devoted to the vile purpose of trying colored

Americans charged, in the quaint language of a New York mechanic, with having been 'born contrary to the Declaration of '76,' and that from its doors many a poor wretch has been borne away into helpless bondage. Our indefatigable friend, Samuel Webb, of Philadelphia, lately presented a petition to the city council, praying that the building wherein, in the year 1776, was proclaimed to an admiring world the sublime truth that all men are created equal, may no longer be prostituted to the purpose of sending men, women, and children, unconvicted of crime, into hopeless, helpless, endless bondage, a purpose inconsistent with the uses to which that building should be applied, which was selected by the founders of the Republic in which to 'proclaim Liberty throughout the land, and to *all* the inhabitants thereof.' The memorial was presented to the council, and it was respectfully received and referred to the committee on city property. What action has been taken on it we have not learned. The first trial of a man charged with being a chattel, at which we were ever present, was held not long ago in that very hall!"

He goes on to tell of a respectable-looking man, who asserted his right to freedom, being delivered to slave-hunters from Maryland, their word being taken as sufficient evidence that he was a slave who had escaped from his master. The justice decided against him, and at once, in that sacred hall, one of the slave-hunters drew from his pocket a pair of handcuffs and took him away in triumph. It was to arouse a people who had become accus-

tomed to such scenes, to the wickedness and inconsistency of permitting them to happen in a free country, that Mr. Whittier was now devoting all his energies. His connection with the "Freeman" during the years 1838–39 was interrupted by excursions to western Pennsylvania, to New York, and to his home in Massachusetts; at times he was incapacitated for work by serious illness. Very few of his poems appear in the "Freeman" during these two years of hard work, harassed by continuous invalidism. In the second number after he took charge appeared the pathetic "Farewell of a Virginia Slave Mother:" —

> "Gone, gone, sold and gone
> To the rice-swamp dank and lone."

The other poems of this period are "The Familist's Hymn," which he copied into his own paper from the "Democratic Review;" a New Year's Address in which he severely lashed C. G. Atherton, of New Hampshire, author of the "gag rule" in Congress; the ode read at the opening of Pennsylvania Hall; a philippic against Governor Porter of Pennsylvania, whose inaugural address took strong grounds against the anti-slavery agitation, and recommended a law to punish sedition;[1]

[1] This poem, published February 28, 1839, does not appear in his collected works. The physician named in the following stanza of it was Dr. Bartholomew Fussell, of Chester County, an active abolitionist: —

> "Go hunt sedition! Search for that
> In every pedlar's cart of rags;
> Pry into every Quaker's hat
> And Dr. Fussell's saddle-bags,
> Lest treason wrap, with all its ills,
> Around his powders and his pills."

"Lines on Receiving a Cane," [1] made from woodwork of Pennsylvania Hall, which the fire had spared; and a poem suggested by being present at the trial of a fugitive slave in the immediate vicinity of Independence Hall, entitled "Republican Man-Robbery." The slave referred to in the last-named poem was handcuffed in the presence of the court and spectators and sent South. These, with the hymn "Worship," are the only verses of Whittier's that appeared in the "Freeman" during the two years he conducted it.

He refused to discuss, or to allow his correspondents to dwell upon, political, religious, or reform topics not bearing directly upon the main object of his paper, saying, "We will not use the funds collected from persons of all sects and parties and opinions for the sole and express object of promoting the abolition of slavery for other purposes." He illustrated this policy with the following parable: —

"When Anthony of Bourbon, during the French King's minority, held the regency of France, he informed the Danish ambassador that he hoped in a short time to procure a free passage for the gospel throughout France. The ambassador, a zealous Lutheran, expressed his pleasure, but hoped that Luther's, not Calvin's, doctrines might pass current. 'Luther and Calvin,' answered the Regent, 'agree in forty points, and differ but in one. Let those therefore that follow the tenets of

[1] This poem is now entitled "The Relic," and the cane was the one he carried all the remainder of his life.

those two unite their strength against the common enemy, and at better leisure, in a more convenient season, compound their own differences.' "

Early in May, 1838, Mr. Whittier attended the annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society in New York, where he offered a resolution that led to an animated debate. This resolution advised members and agents of the society not to rely upon physical force for protection against the violence of their enemies. There was a small majority against this proposition. He returned to Philadelphia in season to see his office destroyed by the mob of May 17, 1838, spent a week in straightening out matters, and then started for Boston, where he attended the annual meeting of the New England Anti-Slavery Society, and was a member of the business committee. During his absence he sent letters to the "Freeman." The New England convention was held in Marlboro chapel, and a mob gathered as in Philadelphia, threatening to destroy the hall, but the mayor promptly took measures to protect the convention. Mr. Whittier says of the Marlboro chapel that it was nearly equal in size and beauty to Pennsylvania Hall. He describes a visit on a June day to the ruins of the Ursuline convent in Charlestown, which was destroyed by a mob in 1834. He says: "The stone literally 'cries out from the wall,' and the scorched timber answers it. Would it not be well to let the walls of our beautiful Hall remain like those of the Charlestown convent, a monument and a warning?" He returned to his work in Philadelphia

the last week in June. Fortunately the printing-office of the "Freeman" was not in the building that had been destroyed by the populace, and the publication of the paper was not interrupted.

Pennsylvania Hall was the largest and finest edifice of its kind in Philadelphia. It had been built by an association of citizens, at a cost of $43,000, that they might have a room in which the principles of liberty and equality of civil rights could be fully discussed, and the evils of slavery portrayed. The dedicatory exercises had been in progress three days, with crowded audiences in attendance; addresses had been delivered by David Paul Brown, William Lloyd Garrison, Arnold Buffum, Angelina Grimké Weld, and others; letters read from John Quincy Adams, Thaddeus Stevens, William Jay, and Gerrit Smith; and also an ode written for the occasion by John G. Whittier. There were threats of violence from a rabble in the streets, incited, it is said, by Southern men sojourning in the city. On the evening of the third day, May 16th, while Garrison was addressing a woman's meeting, the windows were broken by stones, but the inner blinds prevented injury to the audience. Mrs. Weld, a native of South Carolina, delivered an eloquent address in the midst of pauses in the tumult, and Lucretia Mott and Maria W. Chapman, by the grace and dignity of their presence, and the discretion of their speech, prevented an outbreak of violence, which was threatened in the crowded hall. Abby Kelley, of Lynn, on this occasion made her first public address. She said: —

"It is not the crashing of those windows, nor the maddening rush of those voices, that calls me before you. Those pass unheeded by me. But it is the small voice within, which may not be withstood, that bids me open my mouth for the dumb, that bids me plead the cause of God's perishing poor."

When the meeting adjourned, the women passed unharmed through the angry mob that blocked the streets outside. The next morning, a crowd again assembled in the streets, and Daniel Neall, president of the managers of the hall, called upon the mayor for protection. The mayor replied: "It is public opinion that makes mobs, and ninety-nine out of a hundred of those with whom I converse are against you." The city solicitor gave orders to the police not to arrest a single man. Placards had been posted calling for mob violence. The day passed, and nothing was done by the authorities to insure order. In the evening there were fifteen thousand persons assembled in the streets. The mayor gave notice that he would disperse the mob, if he could have possession of the building. The keys were at once given him, and he made this singular speech: —

"There will be no meeting here this evening. This house has been given up to me. The managers had the right to hold their meeting, but as good citizens they have at my request suspended their meeting for this evening. *We never call out the military here.* I would, fellow-citizens, look upon you as my police, and I trust you will keep order. I now bid you farewell, *for the night!*"

The mob gave three cheers for their friend the mayor, and commenced the attack as soon as he was gone. The doors were forced open, the papers from Mr. Whittier's editorial room, the window-blinds, and other inflammable materials were piled upon the speaker's platform in the large hall above. They were set on fire, the gas was turned on, and in a few hours only the blackened walls of the beautiful building were standing. The fire department was called out, but the mob prevented a drop of water from being thrown upon the flames. They were allowed to save only adjoining property. With a change of dress to avoid recognition and assault,[1] Mr. Whittier was active during the fire in saving what he could from his office, which was in the lower story. His paper went to press early the next morning, with this brief account of the outrage from his pen: —

"18th of Fifth month, half past seven o'clock. — Pennsylvania Hall is in ashes! The beautiful temple consecrated to Liberty has been offered a smoking sacrifice to the Demon of Slavery. In the heart of this city a flame has gone up to Heaven. It will be seen from Maine to Georgia. In its red and lurid light, men will see more

[1] Mr. Whittier went out to visit his office, found an excited multitude in the street, and knowing that his life was imperiled if he was recognized, went to the house of his friend, Dr. Parrish, put on a wig and a long white overcoat, and again ventured into the midst of the mob. It added to his security, that having resided in Philadelphia only a few months, he was not much known outside the circle of his friends. When his office was being sacked, he went in with the crowd and secured some things he wished to save from destruction.

clearly than ever the black abominations of the fiend at whose instigation it was kindled. . . . We have no time for comment. Let the abhorred deed speak for itself. Let all men see by what a frail tenure they hold property and life in a land overshadowed by the curse of slavery."

The convention that had been holding its annual meeting in the hall adjourned to meet on the morning of the 18th, to elect officers and transact other business. The meeting was held according to adjournment, and its business transacted in the open street, in front of the smoking ruins, and surrounded by a mob not yet satisfied with violence, though cowed into silence for the time by the dignity and solemnity of the proceedings. Mr. Whittier took part in this meeting, to sustain a resolution he had offered to the effect that the right of suffrage should be held sacred to the cause of freedom, and votes withheld from candidates opposed to the abolition of slavery within the jurisdiction of Congress, who encouraged or in any way sustained mob-law in its attempts to put down freedom of speech and of the press, or favored the disfranchising of colored citizens.

The excitement in the city did not subside for several days. Outrages were frequent against innocent negroes, and against newspapers and individuals that ventured to oppose the mob-spirit. On the evening of the 18th the rioters attacked and set fire to a new building intended as a "Shelter for Colored Orphans," and the next day spent their fury on a Bethel church belonging to colored people. The office of the "Public

Ledger" was threatened, because it had advocated free discussion, but preparations for defense had been made, and the mob did not venture upon an attack. The governor of the commonwealth, to whom Whittier had the year before addressed the poem "Ritner," promptly issued a proclamation expressing the deepest regret that the soil of Pennsylvania had been disgraced by acts of lawless riot, and offering a reward of $500 for the apprehension and conviction of each and every person engaged in the outrage. This action shamed the mayor into issuing a similar proclamation, but he took pains to word it so that only the person who set the fire was to be apprehended.

The jury of inquiry to which was referred the matter of damages the county would be required to pay on account of the destruction of Pennsylvania Hall were three years in making up their decision. They reported in 1841 that the loss amounted to $33,000. The value of the lot was from $10,000 to $15,000. The lot was eventually sold to the order of Odd Fellows, by which a hall for their own purposes was erected and dedicated in 1846.

Reference has been made above to an address made by Mrs. Weld, a native of South Carolina. It was a singular episode of those exciting days that the marriage of Angelina Grimké to Mr. Weld took place the night before the burning of the hall. Miss Grimké was a Quakeress who had freed her slaves, and was delivering eloquent abolition addresses at the North. Mr. Whittier, then editor of the "Freeman," was invited to the wed-

ding, which was attended by a large number of the foremost anti-slavery agitators in the country, Mr. Garrison included. But, as Miss Grimké was marrying "out of society," an orthodox Friend like Mr. Whittier could not lend his countenance to the wedding by assisting at the ceremony. He therefore was absent, but compromised his orthodoxy by escorting a young lady to the house, and the next morning he called again at the door with a congratulatory poem he had written during the night! Both bride and groom were numbered among his dearest friends.

The burning of Pennsylvania Hall was but one sign of the terrible struggle which was at hand. How deeply Whittier was moved, and how instinctively he sought the use of political instruments, will be seen from the two letters which follow: —

TO CALEB CUSHING.

PHILADELPHIA, 3d 6th mo., 1838.

In regard to some political queries in thy letter of last spring, touching the course of the abolitionists in the presidential contest, I will answer briefly. The abolitionists will not lend any support to Van Buren. The Clay resolutions have cost him the votes of thousands. Yet even they will not satisfy the South. He will be pressed to commit himself entirely to the interest of slavery. He will be required to write another North Carolina letter, *à la* Van Buren. A veto pledge will be required. Now will Henry Clay do this? — our Henry Clay, the man we have all loved and

honored and *forgiven* — will he stoop to meanness so ineffable? I should greatly prefer him to Van Buren or General Harrison. But his course in the Senate has surprised and grieved me. Our friends in Vermont, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York, Michigan, and Ohio are not yet wholly prepared to give him up. But a single further "bowing of the knee" to slavery will drive them from him. The extra ounce will break the camel's back. As it is now, Henry Clay stands tolerably well in the South. The extracts from the "Emancipator" and from my paper, commenting severely on his course, have been industriously circulated at the South by his friends, in order to prove that he is regarded by the abolitionists as their sworn enemy. They have been (as I anticipated they would) of essential service to his cause.

Let him, if he has any regard for his former professions, to opinions of the wise and good all over the world, and to the suffrages of the people of the free States, make no further effort to conciliate the slaveholder. I say advisedly, and from personal interviews and correspondence with abolitionists all over the country, that they *will have no more.* Has it come to this, that even to be a slaveholder and a colonizationist is not enough to satisfy the slavery interest! What then ought the free North to demand of a candidate for her suffrage? What ought abolitionists, whose lives and liberty may be at stake on the issue of the question, to ask?

TO J. E. FULLER, BOSTON.

PHILADELPHIA, 8th mo., 16, 1838.

Our cause here is slowly, and against unnumbered obstacles, going ahead. *You* in New England have got *pro*-slavery to contend with; *we* have got into a death-grapple with slavery itself. They leave no stone unturned to put us down. The clergy of all denominations are preaching against us. The politicians are abusing us in their filthy papers; and dirty penny sheets, with most outrageous caricatures of Garrison, Thompson, Angelina Grimké Weld, are hawked daily about the streets. But we shall go ahead nevertheless. We are slow-moulded, heavy-sterned, Dutch-built, out hereaway; but when once started on the right track, there is no backing out with us. The abolitionists of old Pennsylvania are of the right material; many of them don't believe in the devil, and those who do are n't afraid of him. I admire and honor their stern moral courage, in manfully maintaining their ground against a fiendish and bitter opposition.

Mr. Whittier, much broken in health, returned to his home in Massachusetts, in October, 1838, took a hand in the Congressional election, and continued editorial work upon the "Freeman," sending his articles by mail, until April, 1839, when we find him again in Philadelphia. During his absence, early in November, a small volume of his poems was issued by Joseph Healy, the financial agent of the Anti-Slavery Society of Pennsylvania. It was a book of 180 pages, half of it devoted to

poems bearing upon the subject of slavery, and the remaining pages filled with selections from his miscellaneous works. There are fifty poems in this collection, none of them copied from "The Legends of New England," and only eleven of them to be found in the edition of his complete works published just fifty years afterward. The volume is dedicated to Henry B. Stanton, "as a token of the author's personal friendship, and his respect for the unreserved devotion of exalted talents to the cause of humanity and freedom." The poems in this volume were collected and arranged by Mr. Whittier during the summer of 1838. Reference to it is made in this letter to his sister, at Amesbury, written August 3, 1838: —

"What I want of thee is (if thee can do it) to send by mail copies of 'The Fratricide' and 'The Pharisee.' An edition of my poetry is publishing in this city, and I want them very much. . . . My paper is beginning to attract attention, and I should not think it strange if it got pretty essentially mobbed before the summer is out. The colonizationists can set on the dog of the mob just when they choose. I wish I could escape from the duties of an editor for a month or so. My health needs it. I may go out into the country a while, if I can get anybody to supply my place. Last evening I had a delightful walk about one mile and a half out of the city to the Fairmount water works, with a company of 'young friends.' It is a beautiful place; nature has done much, but art infinitely more: fountains are made to gush up from the rocks of the cliffs which overhang

the Schuylkill, through the mouths of images carved out of marble. The view of the river winding down to the city is very fine. My health is better than I could expect, but I have suffered a great deal. I have been out in the country frequently. Send me the two 'poetries' as soon as possible."

The poem "The Fratricide," written in 1831, may be found in the appendix to the Riverside edition of Mr. Whittier's works, but "The Pharisee" is omitted. It is the story of Paul's conversion, told in blank verse.

Whittier struck the keynote of his whole career as a reformer when he quoted, upon the title-page of this first authorized collection of his anti-slavery poems, these noble words of S. T. Coleridge: —

"'There is a time to keep silence,' saith Solomon. But when I proceeded to the first verse of the fourth chapter of the Ecclesiastes, 'and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun, and beheld the tears of such as are oppressed, and they have had no comforter; and on the side of the oppressors there was power,' I concluded this was *not* the time to keep silence; for Truth should be spoken at all times, but more especially at those times when to speak Truth is dangerous."

It was during this visit to his home in the fall of 1838, and just before returning to his editorial duties in Philadelphia, that he wrote in the album of Mary Pillsbury, of West Newbury, the following lines, expressing his love of his New England home:—

Pardon a stranger hand that gives
Its impress to these gilded leaves.
As one who graves in idle mood
An idler's name on rock or wood,
So in a careless hour I claim
A page to leave my humble name.
Accept it; and when o'er my head
A Pennsylvanian sky is spread,
And but in dreams my eye looks back
On broad and lovely Merrimac,
And on my ear no longer breaks
The murmuring music which it makes,
When but in dreams I look again
On Salisbury beach — Grasshopper plain, —
Or Powow stream — or Amesbury mills,
Or old Crane neck, or Pipestave hills,
Think of me then as one who keeps,
Where Delaware's broad current sweeps,
And down its rugged limestone-bed
The Schuylkill's arrowy flight is sped,
Deep in his heart the scenes which grace
And glorify his "native place;"
Loves every spot to childhood dear,
And leaves his heart "untraveled" here;
Longs, 'midst the Dutchman's kraut and greens,
For pumpkin-pie and pork and beans,
And sighs to think when, sweetly near,
The soft piano greets his ear
That the fair hands which, small and white,
Glance on its ivory polished light,
Have ne'er an Indian pudding made,
Nor fashioned rye and Indian bread.
And oh! whene'er his footsteps turn,
Whatever stars above him burn,
Though dwelling where a Yankee's name
Is coupled with reproach or shame,
Still true to his New England birth,
Still faithful to his home and hearth,
Even 'midst the scornful stranger band
His boast shall be of YANKEE LAND.

Something of the same spirit appears in this letter: —

TO CALEB CUSHING.

PHILADELPHIA, 4th mo., 4th, 1839.

My fugitive poems have never been published, except a few in a late volume bound up with my abolition and incendiary verses. I am glad thou hast undertaken to say something of our own Merrimac, endeared to me by all the recollections of childhood, and the ripple of whose waters I still hear in my dreams, even on the banks of the Schuylkill and the Delaware. Some time ago I wrote a prose tale called "Passaconway," the scene of which is on the banks of the Merrimac. I long to return once more to New England, but when I shall it is out of my power to decide. I like the Quaker purity of this city, and its Quaker hospitality, but I would rather live as an obscure New England farmer. I would rather see the sunset light streaming through the valley of the Merrimac than to look out for many months upon brick walls and Sam Weller's "werry beautiful landscape of chimney pots.". . . I am sorry, but I fear Van Buren will be reëlected; it will be hard to give the New England States to Clay.

In July, 1839, he found it necessary, as already mentioned, to give up the drudgery of editorial work, and he called his cousin, Moses A. Cartland, afterwards widely known as a successful teacher, to take his place for a few weeks. He made a tour to western Pennsylvania, working for the cause of anti-slavery reform wherever he went, and sending occasional letters to his paper. Mr. Cartland says of him, "He goes with the hope of

restoring the tone of his worn and wasted energies, exhausted as they have been by unremitting toil in that cause which lies deepest in his affections, the cause of freedom and humanity."

The election of Caleb Cushing having been secured in the North Essex district, Mr. Whittier did not return to his editorial duties in Philadelphia until he had arranged for the sending of petitions from every part of his home district to the next session of Congress, calling for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and for the restriction of the interstate slave trade. His first effort when he resumed his duties as editor of the "Freeman" was to wake up the anti-slavery people of Pennsylvania to the importance of giving their Congressmen no rest until their object was attained. The petitions sent in response to this call were refused reception by a rule adopted by Congress, and the Northern author of this rule received a terrible poetical castigation at the hands of Whittier, in his New Year's address to the patrons of the "Freeman."

On the 14th of March, 1839, Miss Minot wrote to her friend, Elizabeth Whittier, of an interesting rumor, which had, however, no foundation in fact: —

"We have just heard of your brother's engagement. Mr. [A. W.] Thayer and Mr. [H. B.] Stanton brought the information some weeks ago, but it has only now reached us. I congratulate you with all my heart. She came to me in my dreams last night, and so charming a creature I never saw, or before imagined. I passed a few

hours in her society, and I loved her as if she had been the most cherished friend of years. . . . We hear that she is from Brooklyn, and that she is not a Quakeress." [1]

On the 20th of June, 1839, an urgent call was sent to Mr. Whittier, signed by Joshua Leavitt and Henry B. Stanton, to attend a national anti-slavery convention to be held at Albany, N. Y., July 31 of the same year. The American Anti-Slavery Society had become a "close corporation," and many persons favorable to its objects did not find opportunity for efficient work in it. This convention was called to devise means of uniting the strength of all the friends of liberty, and Mr. Whittier's coöperation was earnestly desired. If he could not come, would he not write a letter that could be sent to the convention? He attended the convention, and then went to Saratoga Springs, in the height of the season. From Saratoga he wrote to a Philadelphia friend who had accompanied him to Albany, under date of August 8, 1839: —

"A leisure moment being afforded me, I embrace it to tell thee my adventures since I parted with thee at the Albany Congress Hall. I went out to Saratoga that afternoon, and arrived there about six o'clock, in company with our abolition friends, Hon. Amasa Walker, of Massachusetts, and Henry B. Stanton. On board the cars was a Mississippi lawyer and slaveholder, with his servant. He seemed to take a fancy to me, as a Quaker, and entered into conversation on 'the

[1] This reference is probably to Lucy Hooper.

vexed question' at once. It was maintained very warmly but pleasantly until our arrival at the Springs. We found the best hotels crowded to suffocation, and finally took lodgings at the Pavilion. Here I found Dr. Farnsworth, of Massachusetts, and his daughter, and several other acquaintances, among others two young South Carolinians, upon whom I had formerly bestowed some attention, during their summer sojourn, some years ago, in my native town. They were apparently as pleased to meet me as if I had not been opposed to their 'peculiar institution.' Our Mississippi friend was full of politeness and good nature, and I believe would have been ready to lynch on the spot any one who should have assailed his Quaker friend. He came to the conclusion that the abolitionists were shamefully libeled, and that we were the *true* friends of the South. Many of my Massachusetts friends have arrived at the Springs, during the last two or three days. I am on the whole enjoying myself quite well, and my health is, I think, most decidedly improved, not by drinking the rascally drugged water here, but by travel, exercise, and open air. I wish thee was here, that we might laugh together at the ten thousand ridiculous things which are constantly occurring around us. As it is, I have laughed alone, and that is hard business. It is an admirable place here to study human nature; to watch the manifestations of its pride, vanity, and jealousy; to note the early developments of love, the agony of disappointment, of baffled aims, of wasted affections, of unshared sympathies; Hope

and Despair, Love and Hatred, chastened Desire and unbridled Passion, — all crowded together beneath the light of the same astrals, mingling in the same dance and promenade. For myself, I have been somewhat of a laughing philosopher, and have found amusement wherever I could. . . . Thou wilt perceive that my ink is of a new color, in explanation whereof I will just state that since the above was written, I have been floating New England-ward, and am now writing in the parlor of 'mine own inn,' at Newport, R. I., on the first day of the week and between meetings. I arrived here last night in company with a friend, Judge Hunt, of Rensselaer County, New York, who has been my traveling companion for some days past. Last night, by dint of pushing and scolding, I obtained a berth (not a trifling matter when at least one third of the passengers were left without any accommodations for sleeping whatever), but on going to take possession of it, I found a sturdy six-footer snoring away as regularly as if he had n't stolen his quarters. I gave him a punch in the ribs by way of admonition, and worried him off the premises. He growled like a bear disturbed in his hollow log. I threatened to call the captain, and he set me at defiance. The captain came, and was about to administer lynch law on the spot, when the fellow thrust his berth card in the captain's face and bade him rectify his own blunders. It turned out that the captain had assigned us both one and the same lodging-place, whereupon he pointed to the first empty berth he saw and bade me occupy it. I did so, not without some

compunctious visitations, however, for not long after I had thrown myself upon it, a little bald-headed Frenchman came and looked in upon me and then at his card. He bowed, grinned, and muttered his bad English at me. I made no reply, and he left me. 'Diable!' said he, 'vat vill I do for my sleep?' Headache and weariness made me selfish, and I held possession and left the poor Frenchman to his fate.

"I shall spend a day or two at Newport with my cousins, the Wendells, of Philadelphia. There are a good many of our *orthodox* Friends here at the present time. It is of course pleasant to meet them, only I wish there was less formality and precision among them.

"I was vexed with myself that I did not have more of thy company at Albany. The vexatious business of the convention, and one circumstance and another, prevented me. I feel as if I had been cheated, or, what is still worse, cheated myself out of a great deal of pleasure. But the past may not be recalled. Probably the circumstances which vexed me saved thee from vexation. Was it not so? — I am desirous of hearing from thee an account of thy excursion to Lebanon, Catskill, etc., and shall expect thee to sit down at once and answer this incoherent scrawl."

In August, 1839, his sister Elizabeth thus writes to her friend, Harriet Minot, the anti-slavery war to which she refers being the contest in regard to the "new organization:" —

"Greenleaf has left his paper with cousin Moses Cartland, and gone to Saratoga and elsewhere for

his health. He was at the Albany meeting, which, by the way, I hear was good, quite rational. Does thee ever see the 'Pennsylvania Freeman'? Cousin Moses does nobly in his new station as editor. . . . I want to tell thee about the state meeting at Concord, and to ask on which side thee stands in regard to the anti-slavery war, — it deserves no milder name. I am very sorry for this sort of bitterness among us, and the dividing cry of 'Every man to his tent, O Israel,' is abroad, and each individual, however humble, is summoned now, I think, to the place of decision."

In a letter to the paper Mr. Whittier says he "met many Southern people, had many opportunities of laying our principles before them, and hoped had made favorable impression." From New York he returned to his home in Amesbury, and remained in Massachusetts until October. On the 10th of that month he was again at his desk in Philadelphia, much refreshed and strengthened by his travels. His sister Elizabeth accompanied him on his return. While he was absent Joseph Healy made this announcement in the paper: "In the absence of the editor, we take the liberty of announcing that we have obtained a good likeness of him, with facsimiles of his signature, and that a few (and only a few) copies are for sale at this office, the profits, if any, to go to the cause in which this estimable individual is so effectively engaged."

In the summer of 1839,[1] Henry B. Stanton and

[1] Mr. Stanton in his *Random Recollections* makes this date 1836, but he is in error.

John G. Whittier were deputed by the American Anti-Slavery Society to go through Pennsylvania and employ seventy public speakers, if they could find as many, who should go out to awaken the conscience of the nation in the matter of slavery. They went to the theological schools and other institutions of learning, in the hope to enlist young men in the work. Their mission brought them, among other places, to the Lutheran Institution on Seminary Ridge at Gettysburg. They were charmed with the lovely landscape in view from this lofty outlook, which included the now famous heights known as Cemetery Ridge, Culp's Hill, and the Round Top; but they little dreamed that twenty-four years later these landmarks would have a world-wide celebrity in connection with one of the bloodiest and most decisive battles of modern times, waged for the cause they were there to promote. Mr. Stanton, in his "Random Recollections," says of Whittier in connection with this trip: —

"He cheered me with his genial presence and wise counsel. . . . I am not so beside myself as to imagine that any encomium from me could add to Whittier's literary fame. But having toiled by his side for several years, and spent many a delightful hour in his cottage at Amesbury, it may become me to record that he rendered valuable aid to the anti-slavery cause by his brave example, while his pen sent ringing words of encouragement and shed unfading lustre over the field where the battle raged."

The following extracts from letters to Miss

Elizabeth J. Neall (afterward Mrs. Sidney Howard Gay), daughter of his friend Daniel Neall, of Philadelphia, illustrate some attractive phases of his character. They show how the deep earnestness of that heroic time was lightened and cheered by his sunny humor. He wrote from Carlisle, Pa., July 8, 1839, while he was making the excursion with Mr. Stanton, to which reference has been made: —

"Here we are, or rather here I am, sitting in the front parlor of our friend McKim's, solitary and alone, a stranger in a strange place. Over 'the mountains round about,' especially those which skirt the northwestern horizon, a part of that mountain-wall which girdles the great Cumberland valley, broods a thick thunder-cloud, the lightning flashing with keen brightness over woodland and church-tower, and the thunder uttering its voices, and as our friend Ralph Smith would say, 'reverberating through the valleys.' Miller McKim and H. B. Stanton have gone out in the storm, and I am left alone, an occasional light and cautious step in an adjoining room only reminding me that I am not the sole occupant of the mansion. That step I feel persuaded, nay, I would make my Quaker affirmation of it, is the step of Eliza McKim, a sister of James, whom we met at the tea-table. Why on earth don't she take pity on my forlorn condition and bend her steps this way? What can she be doing? Is she afraid to look upon me? Did she never see a live Quaker before? Maybe she has heard horrible stories of the Yankees, and takes me to be a lineal descend-

ant of one of the Salem witches! Perhaps her household duties detain her; perhaps she is another Martha 'troubled about many things.' Notable must she be as a housewife, famous for her attention to 'the domestic relations' of the pantry and supper dishes. Well, let her have her own way, and I'll have mine; so here goes for a letter to thee, and whether welcome or unwelcome, a letter thee shall have.

"Why didn't we get the breakfast at 325 Arch, according to promise? Why, for a very good reason, nay, perhaps, for *two* good reasons. 1. *We* lay abed too late. 2. Perhaps *thee* did also, and if we had called at the hour specified, and inquired for thee and the breakfast, the report in regard to both might have been '*non est inventus*.' We had hardly time as it was to get to the car office and secure our seats. We rode about two hours, and stopped at a dirty Dutch tavern for breakfast. An execrable cup of tea, which would have poisoned a Chinese mandarin; ham, tough and solid as sheet iron, which had probably been smoked and salted annually for the last twenty years; and some hot cakes saturated with bad butter, greasy and heavy, and anti-Grahamish, constituted our wretched fare. It was such a 'trick upon travelers' as Yankee landlords even would have been ashamed of. We pursued our way till about one o'clock, when we stopped to dine. A tremendous thunder-storm was raging, and the rain falling in torrents. It would have given thee a high opinion of our gallantry if thee could have seen us wait upon the ladies out of the cars, into

the house. We got to Harrisburg about three o'clock, and stopped at the splendid Hotel Wilson, on Market Street. Yesterday Stanton lectured twice, and I made some visits. This morning we spent in looking up some anti-slavery matters, and at three o'clock we again took the cars for Carlisle. To-morrow, if nothing happens, we shall go to Governor Ritner's, and from thence we shall push on to Gettysburg in search of some one or more lecturers to talk Dutch abolition. We have been recommended to some half-dozen Schloshenburgers, and Quackenbosches, and Kakerspergers, and Slambangers, with unpronounceable Dutch names enough to crack the jaws of any Anglo-Saxons, whom we hope to interest in our cause. We must get the Germans with us, by some means or other. These middle counties are full of Germans, and they are on this subject 'thrice dead and plucked up by the roots.' They must be roused up at all events.

"9th, Third-day morning. We have just returned from a ride to Governor Ritner's farm, about nine miles from Carlisle. The old man was out on his farm, and his wife and daughters welcomed us with great hospitality. The governor soon came in in his working dress. We stayed about one hour and a half, and then rode back to Carlisle, where we now are. This afternoon we start for Chambersburg and Gettysburg."

In January, 1840, he made a short visit to Washington, and was in the gallery of the House of Representatives during the great debate on the right of petition, which ended in the shutting out

of all petitions upon the subject of slavery. On the 28th of January he wrote from Washington to Joseph Healy, the publisher of the "Freeman:" —

"We arrived here safe and well to-day, having stopped last night at Baltimore. I have seen Adams, Cushing, etc., and had some conversation with several Southern as well as Northern members, I hope with some effect. I feel better than when I left; expect to be at home on Seventh day. You will see by the 'Globe' of to-day that the right of petition has been denied to us. Northern subserviency has yielded *all* to the demands of the South."

His friends had now become alarmed at the condition of his health, and a skillful physician who was consulted decided that there was serious trouble with his heart, and that he must give up at once the labor and anxiety of editorial life. On the 20th of February he published his valedictory as editor of the "Freeman," and the next week, with his sister Elizabeth, he started for his home in Amesbury, where they arrived after the journey of a week.

CHAPTER VII.

A DECADE OF WORK AT HOME.

1840–1850.

When Whittier resigned his editorial position he planned to attend the world's anti-slavery convention to be held in London, in the month of June, 1840. It was hoped the sea voyage would benefit him. He went so far as to procure his outfit and to engage his passage. But upon consulting his intimate friend, the skillful physician, Dr. Henry I. Bowditch, he was told that while the voyage might prove beneficial if he could avoid all the excitements of society, there was a chance of serious consequences from any mental or physical exertion, and it would be advisable to remain at home. He spent the summer of 1840 in visits among friends, and before he returned to Amesbury attended the Yearly Meeting of Friends at Newport.

TO ELIZABETH H. WHITTIER.

Bucks County, Pa., 5th mo., 1840.

I have been promising to write thee for some days, but a severe cold from which I have as yet but partially recovered has disinclined me to exertion of every kind. My general health is about as usual; I fear not better. I have much pain

in chest and head. I have been now for some time at J. Healy's "Spring Grove Farm," on the banks of the Delaware, or rather on a high bluff overlooking the river, with a fine view of the New Jersey side. Cousin Joseph Cartland came up with me, and stayed five days. There are a great number of Hicksites in this vicinity; they have possession of the old Friends' meeting-houses all through the county. The "Orthodox" have meetings at Solebury, three miles from Joseph Healy's, and at Buckingham, five miles. We attended meeting yesterday at the latter place, in a large new stone building, beautifully situated in a fine grove of forest trees. Some excellent remarks were made by Christopher Healy, who intends to visit New England Yearly Meeting. I expect myself to return by way of Newport, although my health is not equal to a constant attendance of the meetings. I think I shall go back to Philadelphia in a day or two, and after a short visit in Wilmington, return to New York. It is, I believe, well that I did not go to England. It was a great disappointment to me, but it is all right. I wish I could feel wholly resigned to all the allotments of All-Wise Providence, and be more thankful for the blessings still reserved to me. It sometimes seems strange that I cannot do as others around me, but I try to suppress any feeling of repining or murmuring. I feel that I have not deserved the least of the bounties bestowed on me.

TO ANN E. WENDELL.

NEWPORT, 6th mo., 12, 1840.

On reaching New York we received an accession to our company, Joseph John Gurney, Richard Mott, Samuel Parsons, and a large number of younger friends, among them my young abolition friend Mary Murray, who in course of the evening drew out J. J. Gurney upon the subject of his late West Indian tour, much to the edification of ourselves and other passengers. The evening was the most beautiful I ever spent upon the water, warm enough to keep on deck, in view of the heavens glorious with a sunset such as our stranger companions had never seen flushing the cold gray sky or reflected on the shingly beaches and white cliffs of England. Landing at Newport I met a most kind welcome at our friend David Gould's. On First day J. J. Gurney spoke at great length upon the Principles of our Religious Society, and in the course of his remarks made an allusion to the departure of a dear friend, Daniel Wheeler. He spoke of the lips, now cold, which had been touched by a coal from the Lord's altar, of the kind and generous and benevolent heart which had ceased to beat, of the eye of sympathy and love closed up forever. Yet he trusted it was with the eye of faith that he looked into the world of spirits, and felt that the reward of the righteous was sure. He closed with a solemn and earnest appeal to the younger class to prepare themselves by a surrender of all to Christ, for the work of sustaining those principles and testimonies which the dear departed had loved and been faithful to unto the

last. I never saw or felt a more solemn meeting. The immense audience, at least three thousand, were silent as if the building had been closed and tenantless, and tears in the eyes of many told how deeply their hearts had been touched.

C. C. Burleigh, who succeeded Whittier as the editor of the "Pennsylvania Freeman," declined to publish an article sent him by Whittier in regard to the exclusion of women delegates by the London convention. Commenting upon it in a letter to his cousin, Moses Cartland, he said: "Burleigh has written me, declining to publish my article. Very well, I shall not trouble him in future. He says he has reason for believing that had Lucretia Mott been Orthodox (instead of a Hicksite Friend) she would have been admitted. *I* don't believe it." It was difference of opinion upon this unimportant matter which made the first considerable break in the anti-slavery ranks. Whittier agreed with Garrison as to the appropriateness of giving public positions to women capable of holding them, but did not approve of the attempt to force this issue upon a convention, a majority of the delegates to which did not approve of it. He would not drive out of the anti-slavery ranks those who were not ready for the enfranchisement of women. His steadfastness to the anti-slavery cause was too deeply rooted to give way before any factional quarrel or misconception of his attitude.

TO MOSES A. CARTLAND.

AMESBURY, 7th mo., 2, 1840.

I wish to contradict in terms as explicit as possible the rumor which thou mentions from Newport Yearly Meeting. It is most preposterously absurd. My abolitionism grows daily stronger, my faith in its principles is deepening amidst all difficulties and trials and perplexities and vexations of our organizations. Like the pine of Vich Alpine, "Firmer it roots the louder it blow." But I do fear that my faith in our organizations is not of the "saving kind." I have just sent a letter to Joshua Leavitt, declining to act as one of the executive committee of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and another to the anti-slavery convention in this State, declining to allow my name to be on the electoral ticket for Birney and Earle. I am now free from all trammels, and I feel more at ease. Strong in my confidence in the justice of our cause, in the beauty and excellence of our principles, and in the wisdom and expediency of our prominent measures, I am still, as far as my failing health admits of, ready to do and suffer, if need be, for abolitionism. As a man, if not as an abolitionist, I have a right to agree or disagree with the "no government" people, without giving up my faith that a man *is* a man, and not a mere thing! At Newport, and at Philadelphia, and at Lynn, I have spoken as freely in disapprobation of the lukewarm course of a portion of our Friends as the truth would justify, while at the same time I am not prepared to give up Quakerism, to throw myself body and soul into

the antisectarian *sect* about Boston. Free I am to say that I feel a deeper interest than formerly in supporting the religious doctrines and testimonies of our Society, and I hope I shall find strength to manifest that interest; but the cause of the slave still rises solemnly before me, and from the warfare of the oppressed I feel no release, I ask for none. For me, I am sick, but to see thee would get me well again almost. We have now a great excitement here about a parcel of blacks, supposed to be runaways, landed from some vessel on our coast, who are now in the great swamp in this town and South Hampton. I have been out to-day after them, and have seen a boy, but he refuses to tell where he comes from. Depend upon it, we shall get up a great negro hunt here, and try to catch and tame them.

On the 13th of July, 1840, Mr. Whittier left Amesbury for Boston, intending to take the steamship Britannia for Halifax, in the hope of benefit to his health; but the excursion was given up, as were so many projected trips for health and pleasure during his whole life, because he found himself not strong enough to undertake them. In September of the same year he again made preparation for an excursion to Halifax by an ocean steamship, and again was stopped by the delicacy of his health. As he was leaving home on the first occasion, his sister wrote to a friend: —

"It will be lonely when he is away. I am not homesick in Amesbury, but it never seems like

home when Greenleaf is away. We have had a grand 'negro hunt' through our woods, four poor hunted slaves having found their way to our neighborhood. Our people became alarmed; their cows were milked, and sometimes to the frontier farmhouses came stealing, from the woods, a weak suffering man, asking for food, and fleeing when the coarsest crust was given him. A fortnight ago a boy of the gang was caught, but he was too frightened to be able to tell anything, so they sent him Canada-wards. I wish we could find his father and brothers, now in the woods."

TO ANN E. WENDELL.

7th mo., 13, 1840.

Did I mention to thee in my letter from Newport a circumstance in relation to Richard Mott? On Fifth day evening, I called to see J. J. Gurney, agreeable to his request, in reference to abolition matters. After our interview was over, Richard Mott followed me to the door and wished to accompany me to my lodgings. During our walk he told me he knew not how it was or why, but that his mind had been drawn into a deep and extraordinary exercise of sympathy with me; that he had been sensible of a deep trial and exercise in my own mind; that he had felt it so strongly that he could not rest easy without informing me of it, although he had heard nothing and seen nothing to produce this conviction in his mind. He felt desirous to offer me the language of encouragement, to urge me to put aside every weight that encumbers, and to look unto Him who was

able to deliver from every trial. I confess I was startled. Firmly as I believed the Quaker doctrine on this subject, its personal application to myself in a manner so utterly inexplicable by merely human reasoning awed me. I said little to him, but enough to show him something of the state of my mind. Pray for me that I may not suffer this most evident day of the Lord's visitation to pass over and leave me as before. The suggestion of some lines on the death of Daniel Wheeler seemed to strengthen a feeling in my own mind which has resulted in my penning some the other day. If I can publish it I will send it to thee. I have no time to copy it now.

The following extract from a letter to Richard Mott indicates a deep sense of his own spiritual needs, and his desire to be in closer communion with Him who alone could supply them. The letter was written in November, 1840 : —

"I have to lament over protracted seasons of doubt and darkness, to shrink back from the discovery of some latent unfaithfulness and insincerity, to find evil at the bottom of seeming good, to abhor myself for selfishness and pride and vanity, which at times manifest themselves, — in short, to find the law of sin and death still binding me. My temperament, ardent, impetuous, imaginative, powerfully acted upon from without, keenly susceptible to all influences from the intellectual world, as well as to those of nature, in her varied manifestations, is, I fear, ill adapted to that quiet, submissive, introverted state of patient and

passive waiting for direction and support under these trials and difficulties. I think often of our meeting at Rhode Island, and at times something of a feeling of regret comes over me, that I am so situated as not to be permitted to enjoy the company and the care and watchful ministrations of those whose labors have been signally owned by the Great Head of the church. Sitting down in our small meeting, and feeling in myself and in the meeting generally a want of life, and of the renewing baptism of that Spirit which alone can soften the hardness and warm the coldness of the heart, I sigh for the presence and the voices of the eminent and faithful laborers in the Lord's vineyard. I know that this out-looking of the spirit, this craving of the eye and of the ear, is wrong, but in the depths of spiritual weakness, is it not natural to crave the support even of an earthly arm?"

In the article given below, and hitherto unpublished, he defines his belief upon several doctrinal points: —

"The central thought, the root-idea of Quakerism, so called, is as old as human needs. Not only is it affirmed in the venerable Jewish Scriptures, but with more or less distinctness also in the remarkable Vedas of India, coming down to us from the solemn remoteness of ages; and in the utterances of prophets, poets, priests, and philosophers, of all peoples and times, which remain to testify that at no period, and in no nation, God hath left himself without witnesses. Its fitting expression may be found in the word *Immanuel*, God with us.

"God is One; just, holy, merciful, eternal, and almighty Creator, Father of all things. Christ, the same eternal One, manifested in our Humanity, and in Time; and the Holy Spirit, the same Christ, manifested within us, the Divine Teacher, the Living Word, the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

"The Scriptures are *a* rule, not *the* rule of faith and practice, which is none other than the living omnipresent spirit of God. The Scriptures are a subordinate, secondary, and declaratory rule, the reason of our obedience to which is mainly that we find in them the eternal precepts of the Divine Spirit, declared and repeated, to which our conscience bears witness. . . . They testify of Christ within. We believe in the Scriptures, because they believe in us, because they repeat the warnings and admonitions and promises of the indwelling Light and Truth, because we find the law and prophets in our souls. We agree with Luther, that 'the Scriptures are not to be understood but by that very spirit by which they were written,' and with Calvin, that 'it is necessary that the same spirit which spoke by the mouth of the prophets should convince our hearts that they faithfully delivered that which God committed to them.'"

While thus emphasizing the "Immanence of the Holy Spirit," the spiritual work of Christ in the heart, with its converting, sanctifying power, several of his poems, especially "The Crucifixion," indicate that he accepted with reverent gratitude the solemn significance of the outward sacrifice,

the manifestation of the Father's infinite love for his children, thus opening the way for their redemption from the guilt and power of sin. In a letter to "The Friend," written in 1866, to correct an error as to his religious belief, made by a lecturer, he says: —

"My ground of hope for myself and for humanity is in that Divine fullness of love which was manifested in the life, teachings, and self-sacrifice of Christ. In the infinite mercy of God so revealed, and not in any work or merit of our nature, I humbly, yet very hopefully trust. I regard Christianity as a life, rather than a creed; and in judging of my fellow-men I can use no other standard than that which our Lord and Master has given us, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' The only orthodoxy that I am especially interested in is that of life and practice."

With regard to our condition in the future life, Whittier thus replies to a letter from an inquiring friend: —

"I think I understand thy inquiry. I am not a Universalist, for I believe in the possibility of the perpetual loss of the soul that persistently turns away from God, in the next life as in this. But I do believe that the Divine love and compassion follow us in all worlds, and that the Heavenly Father will do the best that is possible for every creature He has made. What that will be must be left to his infinite wisdom and goodness. I would refer thee to a poem of mine, 'The Answer,' as containing in few words my belief in this matter."

TO ANN E. WENDELL.

LYNN, 11th mo., 1840.

I was in Boston this week, and looked in twice upon the queer gathering of heterogeneous spirits at the Chardon Street chapel assembled under a call issued by Maria W. Chapman, Abby Kelley, and others, to discuss the subjects of the Sabbath, ministry, and church organizations, and some twenty other collateral subjects. When I was present the chapel was crowded, a motley-opinioned company, from the Calvinist of the straitest sect to the infidel and scoffer. Half of the forenoon of the first day was spent in debating whether the convention should be organized by the choice of president and secretary, or whether these old-fashioned restraints should be set aside as unworthy of advocates of "the largest liberty," leaving each member to do and say what seemed right in his own eyes! It was finally decided to have a president. Then came on a discussion about the Sabbath, in which Garrison and two transcendental Unitarians, and a woman by the name of Folsom, argued that every day should be held sacred; that it was not a rest from labor but from sin that was wanted; that keeping First day as holy was not required, etc. On the other hand, Amos A. Phelps, Dr. Osgood, and some others contended for the Calvinistic and generally received views of the subject. Dr. Channing, John Pierpont, and many other distinguished men were present, but took no part in the discussions. No Friends were members of the convention, although there were several lookers-on. Judging from the

little I saw and heard, I do not think the world will be much the wiser for the debate. It may have a tendency to unsettle some minds.

Mr. Whittier remained at home in Amesbury during the winter of 1840–41. In March, 1841, he wrote to Miss Minot, of Haverhill: —

"Thy letter was heartily welcome, for I had been for some days too stupid and dull to feel any interest in things present, and naturally enough my mind wandered back to the past, and scenes which are now but memories and the old familiar faces have been with me. I should have been glad to make Haverhill a visit in the winter, but the extremely delicate state of my health has compelled me to forego the pleasure. I feel now somewhat better, but I have little confidence in it. Well, I am in God's hands, and striving to resign myself to his will, not however, I fear, as I ought to. With all my suffering, I have many blessings, infinitely more than I deserve. . . . I now think some of going next week to New York and Philadelphia, partly to escape our east winds which I dread. I think sickness has a wonderful effect in fanning into life the half-extinguished conscience. It is doubtless better for me and for my friends that the hand of sickness is sometimes laid heavily upon me. Who knows what either thou or I should have been had we always enjoyed good health?"

In April, 1841, Mr. Whittier was in New York, and here he met for the first time the eminent English philanthropist, Joseph Sturge. It was in

company with Mr. Sturge that Mr. Whittier visited the slave-dealing establishments of H. H. Slaughter, in Baltimore, and attended the Baptist convention in that city while it was discussing the question of eliminating all abolitionists from its missionary board.

TO HARRIET MINOT.

PHILADELPHIA, 5th mo., 26, 1841.

I have been in company with Joseph Sturge, of England, at New York, Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore, endeavoring to do something for the cause of abolition, with what success time will show. I shall go with Mr. Sturge to Washington next week. I sent the other day a copy of J. J. Gurney's "Letters on West India Emancipation" to Henry Clay. I was in Baltimore during the sitting of the great Triennial Baptist Convention, and heard the discussion on slavery, or rather upon the question of excluding Galusha and others, as abolitionists, from the Foreign Mission Board. Dr. Brisbane, of Cincinnati, late of South Carolina, took a noble stand.

From Baltimore Mr. Whittier accompanied Mr. Sturge to Wilmington, in Delaware, but from increase of indisposition was unable to go farther with him. In the following June, we find Mr. Whittier and Mr. Sturge again together at Wilmington, Delaware, attending a meeting of anti-slavery men in that slave State, who were considering a project for buying all the slaves in Delaware, and setting them free. It was calculated that a tax of a dollar an acre would be sufficient to pur-

chase every slave. From Wilmington they went to Washington, and were favored with seats behind the speaker's chair during the famous debate on the "gag" rule. They called together on John Quincy Adams, and on President Tyler, who had declined to receive a memorial from the British Friends signed by Thomas Clarkson which Sturge was commissioned to offer, upon the subject of slavery. On a visit to the Senate, Henry Clay had a conversation with them. He accused Whittier of deserting him, after being his warm friend. Whittier gave his reasons, and Clay complained that the abolitionists improperly interfered with the affairs of the South. He inquired if Whittier was a Friend in regular standing, intimating a doubt on that point on account of his being such a decided abolitionist. They went from the Senate chamber to a slave-pen within sight of the Capitol, and to the loathsome city jail, where Dr. Crandall had been confined until his health broke down, and he was liberated to die. Upon their return to Philadelphia, Mr. Whittier accompanied his English friend in a visit to Abraham L. Pennock, an aged and influential Friend and devoted philanthropist, at Haverford. This visit they both looked back upon in after years with most grateful feelings. From Pennsylvania they proceeded to Newport, R. I., and attended the Yearly Meeting of Friends. But the burthen of their mission for the slaves was as quietly as possible ignored by the Meeting. They were not allowed the use of the meeting-house for an anti-slavery gathering. While in Newport they called upon Rev. Dr.

William Ellery Channing, who made the suggestion that petitions should be sent to Congress praying that the Free States might be relieved from all direct or indirect support of slavery. They journeyed to Boston, by way of New Bedford, where Mr. Sturge made note that for the first time in the United States he attended a meeting at which the colored part of the audience were placed on a level with, and sat promiscuously among, the whites. Mr. Whittier took his distinguished guest with him to his home in Amesbury, where they rested for a few days, and then returned to Boston. A long interview was had with Garrison, and an attempt made to come to an understanding that would unite the two wings of the anti-slavery forces. But Garrison insisted upon the right of women to take part equally with men in the transactions of the Anti-Slavery Society, — a right the Quakers of course did not deny, while they thought the question need not then be pressed. On their way to New York, they stopped at Worcester, and here Mr. Whittier became so ill that he was obliged to return to Amesbury. On the 24th of July, 1841, Mr. Sturge and Mr. Whittier met again in New York, and returned together to Boston, afterward visiting Lynn and Lowell. The English Quaker embarked for home in August. The friendship between the two men lasted until the death of Mr. Sturge, in 1859. He omitted no opportunity to be helpful to Whittier when illness or financial embarrassment gave him an opportunity to offer his purse. Perceiving Whittier's failing health, and his need of rest,

just as he was embarking for home, in August, 1841, he left with Lewis Tappan, of New York, one thousand dollars, upon which he wished Mr. Whittier to draw as he might need. This is his memorandum of the transaction : —

Joseph Sturge places at the disposal of his friend, J. G. Whittier, one thousand dollars, during the next twelve months, for his personal and other current expenses of housekeeping, traveling, etc., or a visit to a tropical climate for the sake of his health ; and if he should not need the whole for this purpose he will please apply the remainder to any traveling or other expenses connected with his labor with the " Reporter," or any other anti-slavery object.

Boston, 7th month, 30th, 1841.

There is no means of ascertaining in what manner Mr. Whittier availed himself of this generous gift, or indeed whether he accepted it for his personal needs. He certainly took no trip for his health. We find among his papers a letter from Lewis Tappan, dated March 14, 1842, in which he speaks of a thousand dollars left with him by Joseph Sturge " for the furtherance of the anti-slavery cause," of which he has expended all but four hundred dollars, and he asks Mr. Whittier's advice as to the disposal of this amount. This is probably the fund that was originally intended for Mr. Whittier, and which he declined to accept.

While traveling with Joseph Sturge, Mr. Whittier wrote as follows to his cousin, Moses A. Cartland, from Philadelphia, May 12, 1841 : —

"I have been for the last three weeks peregrinating with Joseph Sturge, trying to fan into life the all but expiring embers of abolition. We have labored with Friends and Gentiles, Jew and Greek, and have had much to encourage us on the whole. Thee would like Joseph Sturge much, — a fine, free-hearted nobleman of nature; no pretension; a clear-headed, stout-hearted, practical philanthropist; the 'Howard of our day,' as he is called in England. Rogers and Garrison have been in Philadelphia, but I did not see them, being most of the time in Baltimore and Wilmington."

Mr. Sturge found many Quakers who, like Whittier, were ready to assist him in delivering his anti-slavery message to the American Friends, but the Society as a whole was rather cool and indifferent, both at Philadelphia and at Newport. In writing about it to a cousin in Philadelphia, some months after Sturge's return to England, Mr. Whittier says: —

"When I was in your city last, I was so anxious about J. Sturge's visit, and the course of Friends, and the little difficulties which we met with, that I was hardly myself. I recollect calling at the L——'s some two or three times, when my mind was altogether away and dwelling upon other things. What they thought of me I have often marveled at since. It was not on my own account that I felt uneasiness, — I am used to such things, — but I felt keenly for my English friend."[1]

[1] In a letter to Sturge, he says: "This cause [anti-slavery] has been to me what the vision on the house-top of Cornelius was to Peter — it has destroyed all narrow sectarian prejudices, and made me willing to be a man among men."

His sister Elizabeth, writing to the same cousin, refers to the same matter: —

"How we did love Joseph Sturge! His bland, kind face will be a joy in my memory forever. He *must*, he *will* do good among us. I am afraid I shall not love my own Yearly Meeting as well as I used to, now they have folded their idle hands, when so kindly requested to labor in their *own way*, thus wrapping the mantle of their own slumber which is unto death about a Christian brother's labors of love. I am a very naughty, wicked girl, I know, and I hardly dare make up my mind about such important movements. May love, charity, hope, and patience be given to all!"

Mr. Whittier, in a letter to Mr. Sturge, related this instance, which occurred under the administration of John Tyler, to illustrate the all-pervading espionage of the slave power, which dictated every appointment to office from a letter-carrier to an ambassador: "The newly appointed postmaster of Philadelphia employed among his numerous clerks and letter-carriers Joshua Coffin, who, some three years ago, aided in restoring to liberty a free colored citizen of New York, who had been kidnapped and sold into slavery. The appointment of the postmaster not being confirmed, he wrote to his friends in Congress to inquire the reason, and was told that the delay was occasioned by the fact that he had employed Coffin as one of his letter-carriers! Coffin was immediately dismissed, and in a few days the Senate confirmed the appointment!"

In another letter to his English correspondent

Mr. Whittier says: "To every well-wisher of America it must be a matter of interest and satisfaction to know, that there is a growing determination in the Free States to meet the combination of slaveholders in behalf of slavery, by one of freemen in behalf of liberty; and thus compel the party politicians, on the ground of expediency, if not of principle, to break from the thralldom of the slave power, and array themselves on the side of freedom." He has here outlined the policy to which he adhered steadily and consistently in all the political work of his life.

The following letter was written to Lucy Hooper's sisters, immediately after hearing of her death:

AMESBURY, 8th mo., 6, 1841.

I have just seen in the Boston papers a notice of the death of Lucy. The news has come to me unexpected — sudden. I was not prepared for such a termination of her illness. Sick myself, I cannot write you a very long letter, nor perhaps would you wish it; for what can I say to comfort you under your new bereavement — what condolence can I offer to those who have been able fully to understand and appreciate the purity and beauty of the spirit which has just passed from among you? He, alone, who loveth those whom He chasteneth can comfort and sustain you under such a trial as yours. To Him, who hath taken to the arms of His Love our dear Lucy, I can alone commend you.

When in New York only a few weeks ago, I *might* have seen Lucy; and I blame myself for

yielding to my own feelings of sickness and lassitude, and not calling again, before I left. I intended to have spent the evening of Tuesday with you, but was confined to my room all the afternoon and evening by severe pain, and the next day I was under the necessity of leaving. At Boston, I was conversing with H. T. Tuckerman about Lucy — the very day before her death. I had never seen him before, but his acquaintance with you made him seem like an old friend. Do write me, and let me know the many particulars of her last illness, and of the last mournful scene. I am no stranger with a stranger's careless curiosity. I have had few friends so dear to me — so often in my thoughts — as Lucy.

What shadows we are! — It seems but yesterday when I used to visit you in the long winter evenings at Brooklyn — since Lucy and myself stood by her own loved Merrimac together in the rich light of a westering August sun. And can it be that she is no longer with us! — *But she is not gone.* Her pure affections, her fine intellect, her faith and love, and simple trust in her Heavenly Father, are not lost. She lives still, — a glorified dweller in the same universe with ourselves. With the deepest sympathy with your afflicted mother and with yourselves and brother, and with a warm desire that this dispensation of Providence may be blessed to us all, I am very sincerely, etc.

It has often been a matter of speculation whether passages in "The Last Eve of Summer," "A Sea Dream," "Memories," and other poems,

were not the expression of a tender emotion which had been sacrificed to adverse circumstances. If there were ever any doubt that the sweet and tender poem, "Memories," was inspired by a romance of the poet's youth, that doubt was dispelled by the position Whittier has given these charming verses in his collected works. It was not without thought and deliberation that in 1888 he directed this poem should be placed at the head of his "Subjective and Reminiscent" poems. He had never before publicly acknowledged how much of his heart was wrapped up in this delightful play of poetic fancy. The poem was written in 1841, and although the romance it embalms lies far back of this date, possibly there is a heart still beating which fully understands its meaning. The biographer can do no more than make this suggestion, which has the sanction of the poet's explicit word. To a friend who told him that "Memories" was her favorite poem, he said, "I love it too; but I hardly knew whether to publish it, it was so personal, and near my heart."

To a correspondent who expressed compassion because he never married, and asked how it happened, he replied: "Circumstances — the care of an aged mother, and the duty owed to a sister in delicate health for many years — must be my excuse for living the lonely life which has called out thy pity. It is some, if a poor, consolation to think that, after all, it might have been a great deal worse. My life has been on the whole quite as happy as I deserved, or had a right to expect. I know there has something very sweet and beauti-

ful been missed, but I have no reason to complain. I have learned, at least, to look into happiness through the eyes of others, and to thank God for the happy unions and holy firesides I have known."

TO ANN E. WENDELL.

WALNUT GROVE, LEE, N. H., 7th mo., 1842.[1]

I like thy remarks about the Liberty party and its dangers, and I thank thee for thy friendly caution. I am not much affected by the whirl of politics. I act because I believe it to be my duty, decidedly and vigorously, but my inward self is calm. The ambitions and selfish hopes of other years do not disturb me. Why it is so, I know not, but I can mingle in the exciting scenes of an election without feeling the excitement to any considerable extent. My enthusiasm has been tamed down by that hard and cross-grained schoolmistress, Experience. . . . Moses and Anna are disputing as usual upon metaphysics, Joseph and Jonathan are in full blast upon politics, and I am holding a sort of collateral sideways conversation with all parties; and the truth is, my head is getting into confusion, its ideas holding a sort of internecine war with each other. I can't get "into the quiet." Tubal Cain, Jr., master builder on the Babel corporation, was never more bewildered by the confusion of tongues than I am at this moment. Then, in addition to all, the thermometer has boiled over. The heat is really oppressive, and all day I have been ready to say with another: —

[1] While visiting his cousins, the Cartlands.

I wake from dreams of polar ice
On which I 'd been a slider,
Like fishes dreaming of the sea,
And waking in the spider.

P. S. I must defer my visit to Philadelphia until thy sister M. invites Elizabeth and myself to her wedding. Tell her that this fall will be a suitable time, in our opinion. There is such a thing as overdoing this courting business; for my part, were I in Elisha's place, I should get out of all patience. To be obliged to travel a mile and a half every night, year in and year out, is more than I could submit to, even for so good a girl as cousin M. And besides, looking at it absolutely, is n't it rather ridiculous for two young folks? Why not marry at once and have done with it?

TO HARRIET MINOT.

AMESBURY, 5th mo., 5, 1842.

H. C. Wright, as I learn from the "Liberator," is going to England to *discuss*. In view of the state of things in that country, would it not be better to spend the money required for his outfit and salary in purchasing barrels of beef and flour for the starving families of Manchester and Leeds? Discussion is doubtless good, but sometimes bread and meat are better.

TO ANN E. WENDELL.

8th mo., 19, 1842.

The serene, calm faith which breathes through thy letters rebukes at times my own restless and inquiring spirit. I learn to love through them the

wise philosophy which, estimating its poor and finite powers by the weighty and awful Idea of Infinite Intelligence and Omnipotence, ceases to search into the mysteries of its own being and of the Divine economy, and bows with veiled eye and simple submission to the will of the Universal Father. . . . How vividly thy letter has brought you all before me, in beautiful La Grange, and how happy I should be to be able to look in upon you, and to repeat my stroll up the banks of the river, to the old church, the graveyard and its white stones, overhung with the green forest! How strange it is that the momentary glimpse of a landscape, a smile, the tone of a word spoken carelessly, a tree, the shadow of a cloud on the hillside, should burn themselves like enamel upon the mind, and live there ever after a part of our conscious being!

TO THE SAME.

8th mo., 1843.

I should be heartily glad to visit Philadelphia, to sit with cousin Ann, and discuss upon the great problems of human life and destiny, and not upon those high abstractions alone, but upon the household things, the simple, the tender, and the beautiful of daily life, which

"Lie scattered at the feet of man like flowers,"

and talk with thy mother about Luther, Melanchthon, and Pope and Cardinal, and Fathers and Councils. Speaking of these matters, does thee read much of the Puseyism controversy which is now going on? The English Episcopal Church

seems ready to go over to Popery in earnest. Has thee noticed the general tendency towards the old trust in man, — in priests, sacrifices, and ghostly mummery and machinery? To me it seems to bid fair to swallow up everything save Quakerism of *the old stamp*, which has this advantage, that its distinctive characteristic is the entire rejection of *all* ceremonial, the total disbelief in the power of pope, priest, or elder to give a ransom for the soul of another. Well, let the world, sick of doubt and infidelity, go back and try once more the old superstitions which the Voltaires and Gibbons and Humes of the last century exposed to scorn and derision. Let the old tricks of monks and priests again deceive and amuse self-blinded Christendom. I have a strong faith — it seems almost like prophecy — that the result will be, ere the lapse of two centuries, a complete and permanent change in the entire Christian world. Weary and disgusted with shams and shadows, with the effort to believe a few miserable worms of the dust the sole dispensers of Heaven's salvation, men will awake to the simple beauty of practical Christianity. Love will take the place of fast, penance, long prayers, and heathenish sacrifices; altar, church, priest, and ritual will pass away; but the human heart will be the Holy of Holies, where worship will still be performed, not in set forms, and on particular occasions, but daily and hourly a worship meet and acceptable to Him who is not deceived by the pomp of outward ceremonial, and who loves mercy better than sacrifice. . . . I had a visit from Lewis Tappan and wife and daughter, the

other day; he is just from England. He says the Friends there were very anxious to have the pro-slavery Methodists, Baptists, etc., of America exposed in the World's Convention, but evidently feared to hear the truth of the course of Friends in America disclosed. If I had nothing else to be thankful for, I should still feel grateful that I have not become a bigoted sectarian. To me, Quaker and Catholic are alike, both children of my Heavenly Father, and separated only by a *creed*, to some, indeed, a barrier like a Chinese wall, but to me frail and slight as a spider's web. . . . I think some of attending the great anti-slavery convention at Buffalo on the 30th and 31st of this month.

With all his charity for other sects, Mr. Whittier held firmly to the faith in which he was educated. He did not like to see the Friends adopting the evangelizing methods of other denominations. He used to quote with approval a remark made to him by Rev. Dr. Withington, of Newburyport, who said: "I am a Calvinist; you are a Quaker. We are in essentials in unity. But you will remain a Quaker to the end, and I a Calvinist. It is better so. I don't believe in spiritual chowder." Mr. Whittier did not object to the lively music and spirited exhortation of the Methodists, but he thought that the Quakers made a "spiritual chowder" of it when they, who as a class had no ear for music and few of the graces of oratory, undertook to imitate the methods of sects in which music and elocution are carefully studied, and the meet-

ings of which are considered a failure if all the time is not "occupied." He loved best the old-fashioned Quaker meetings in which the silence was not broken unless some weighty word pressed for utterance. On one occasion he was discussing with a cultured Friend the inarticulate groanings which punctuated the remarks of some of the speakers of their faith. His friend said, "Let us discourage this mannerism by calling it grunting." "Thee better not do it," gravely replied Mr. Whittier; "if thee take away the grunt, there 's nothing left."

When reference was made to the Quaker misuse of English grammar, Mr. Whittier would say that it had been the manner of speech of his people for two centuries, and he clung to it with especial fondness because it was his mother's language. Occasionally, in talking with strangers, he would adopt the usual form, but he rarely did so in his letters, either in dates or in personal pronouns. He was accustomed to say that the Quaker costume had its use in keeping Friends from indulging in the frivolities of the world's people. He was never in a theatre or a circus in his life. He bore his testimony to the peculiarities of his sect on all occasions. When a member of the legislature, he adhered to the Quaker custom in the matter of the oath, and in addressing the chair. When a fellow member died he declined to wear crape on his arm, and the practice was given up after that time. When he became Secretary of the American Anti-Slavery Society, he succeeded a secretary who kept dates in the customary way. Lewis Tappan, looking at

his neat records, was puzzled by the Quaker dates, but he laughed as he read "12th mo., 6th," or "2d day evening," and said he had no objection to this kind of date, "but Friend Whittier must be here to interpret."

In his later life the Quaker was shown in his dress only in his coat, all other clothing being in the prevailing fashion. This coat of black broadcloth was cut in the orthodox Quaker style. The Philadelphia tailor who supplied him during his residence in that city in 1838–1840, sent him from time to time all the coats he wore for the remainder of his life, without the slightest change in style or measurement.

Of innovations in the methods of Quakerism he would say, "Our folks have got to talking too much; they even want a glass of water on the table, and some of them want singing in the meetings. I tell them if they want singing, they must get the world's folks to do it for them, for two hundred years of silence have taken all the sing out of our people."

The skill and sagacity Mr. Whittier had shown in his editorial work upon political journals, in managing conventions, and in influencing legislation, together with the earnestness of his advocacy of the reforms then demanding attention, gave him prominence among the men who decided upon the necessity of a third party, since neither of the great national parties dared grapple with the issues presented by the aroused conscience of the nation.

In 1834, James G. Birney, a Kentucky slave

holder, came out in favor of immediate emancipation, at the same time liberating his own slaves. Finding it impossible to disseminate his views in his own State, he moved to Cincinnati, and published a paper called the "Philanthropist," which became a powerful instrument in forming public opinion. His experience as a slaveholder, his philanthropic action as a liberator, and the readiness with which he defended his opinions with his pen and upon the platform, gave him importance in the ranks of the abolitionists who favored political action. He came to New England in 1835, and received much attention from friends of the cause. John G. Whittier, Moses A. Cartland, and others of the Society of Friends, on the 28th of May, 1835, wrote him a series of seven questions covering the whole ground of the policy to be adopted for the extinction of slavery, and his full and explicit answer was widely circulated. He thought that under the Constitution as it then existed, operations against slavery could be undertaken with success; that there was no need of tearing down the whole structure of our political institutions to extirpate this evil. This led to the formation of the Liberty party, in the organization of which Mr. Whittier was active and efficient. Birney was nominated for the Presidency in 1840 and 1844, and was supported by Mr. Whittier in both these campaigns. The Liberty party of the North Essex district nominated Mr. Whittier for Congress, and so long as he was in no danger of being elected he did not object to being a candidate. But at length his party became strong

enough in the district to cause alarm to the Whigs, for a coalition with the Democrats was threatened, and such a coalition would certainly have been favored by Mr. Whittier if an anti-slavery candidate could have been found among the Democrats of North Essex who possessed such qualifications as caused the concentration of the Liberty vote of South Essex upon Robert Rantoul, and elected him. Mr. Whittier had a hand in managing this last-named combination, and had reason to be proud of the record of Rantoul in Congress, as is shown in his fine poetic tributes to his memory. In 1842, both Whigs and Democrats nominated men for Congress from whom Whittier could obtain no pledges in behalf of the cause he had at heart. He therefore prevented an election by remaining the third-party candidate during many successive trials, through the year 1843, the district in the mean time being unrepresented in Congress. At each trial Mr. Whittier's vote increased. At last, in December, 1843, an article appeared in the Boston "Courier," said to have been suggested by Daniel Webster, advising the Whigs in North Essex to drop their candidate and unite upon Whittier, as he was and always had been a Whig in principle, and was to be preferred to the Democratic candidate. Some of the friends of the Whig candidate resented this interference from outside the district, and brought up against Whittier a charge that he had on several occasions worked for the Democrats, notably in the case of Robert Rantoul when named for the senatorship and Marcus Morton for the governorship. The "Cou-

rier" had spoken of Whittier as a mechanic, and to this a Whig paper in the district responded: "It is true that in youth he was obliged to learn a mechanical trade, but the editor of the 'Courier' would recognize little of the mechanic in the sleek-looking kid-gloved beau of the last seven years. He has no more sympathy with mechanics than with Whigs. The Whigs can never come into support of John G. Whittier until they lose all regard for principle and all self-respect."

Notwithstanding this blast from the party organ, as the day of election approached, it seemed probable that the advice of Webster would be heeded. Whittier became alarmed at the prospect of being elected, and immediately wrote a letter declining the candidacy. The Liberty candidate who took his place had not his personal popularity, and the Whigs at once elected their man. If Whittier's health had permitted, he would have remained in the field, and if elected would have made an efficient member of Congress, with an influence upon legislation superior to that of many men with readier tongues. His ambition was distinctly in that direction; but he found it necessary to heed the admonition of his medical adviser, and keep on the outer circles of the maelstrom of politics. All his life he was in touch with the political movements of the country, and was the trusted adviser of statesmen. A kind Providence, however, by a seeming affliction, had set him apart for a still higher usefulness.

Rev. John Pierpont, pastor of the Hollis Street church, Boston, was in these days causing a great

stir throughout New England by a bold and uncompromising determination to speak freely in his pulpit in favor of temperance and anti-slavery reforms, notwithstanding the opposition of many of the most influential people in his own society. The popularity thus acquired Mr. Whittier thought might be made available to the Liberty party, if Mr. Pierpont would consent to accept a nomination for Congress. Accordingly he wrote to Samuel E. Sewall, under date of February 12, 1842: —

"I wrote some days ago to John Pierpont about the nomination, *on my own responsibility*, as an individual, and have received a line from him. As I understand it, he is willing to stand as our candidate; but thinks it due to those of his society who have so faithfully stood by him in his contest with the powers of rum to consult a little their feelings in the matter — or at least the feelings of two or three of the leading members. I understand he has consulted F. Jackson about it; Jackson, I think, would offer no decided objection. Wilt thou immediately see Alden or Dr. Mann, and if it is judged best, call on two or three of the most prominent of the society. It would be well to have their concurrence and aid. It should be presented to them in its most favorable aspect: that it is the strongest testimony which we can render to the noble reformer and the firm and faithful friends who have sustained him in the Hollis Street pulpit; that there is even a reasonable probability that he may be elected; that there is perfect enthusiasm for him among all to whom the subject of his nomination has been mentioned. Has anything been done

about securing the State House for our evening meetings? If Pierpont is at home, ask him not to leave Boston, if he can avoid it, until after the convention.[1] I wish to see him, as if I am able I shall be in Boston before the meeting."

In March, 1842, Mr. Whittier wrote to Mr. Sewall: "I fear we shall get dragged into a war after all, — a war in defense of the vilest negro traffic existing anywhere save on the African coast! It is unendurable! And if Texas is to be added to us, as there are no doubtful indications, let us say, Disunion before Texas! . . . By letters from England I find that our minister at Paris, General Cass, has entitled himself to the Presidency by his vigorous efforts for the protection of that Democratic branch of commerce, — the foreign slave trade!" The letter containing these passages is sealed with a wafer bearing this inscription: "The minister who defends slavery defends sin, and is false to his trust."

The "Pioneer" magazine, mentioned in the following letter from Mr. Lowell, was a literary and critical monthly, published in Boston by Leland & Whitney, and edited by James Russell Lowell

[1] Mr. Pierpont received the nomination for Congress from the Liberty party convention, but declined it in a letter to Mr. Whittier, in which he said that he must postpone his work for the slave until a minister of the gospel became a free man; "for he can never be so," he adds, "so long as the pulpit is controlled by the pews. This freedom is prior in the order of time to the freedom of the slave, and this freedom my friends and myself are endeavoring to vindicate, where it has been openly and powerfully assailed. Let us work out *our* problem, — a labor quite severe enough for the hands engaged in it, — and *yours*, my friend, will be worked out the sooner for it."

and Robert Carter. Only three numbers were issued, for the months of January, February, and March, 1843. It had a good sale at the start, and the publishers, encouraged by this, launched into other enterprises that proved disastrous failures, and caused the suspension of the magazine. It was Lowell's first venture in editorship. The poem of Whittier's in the "Democratic Review" to which he refers was in the October number, 1842, and was entitled "Lines on reading several Pamphlets published by Clergymen against the Abolition of the Gallows." Lowell's sonnets, called out by reading Wordsworth's defense of capital punishment, appeared in the May number of the "Review," and they must have been almost unintelligible to the readers of the magazine, for the reason he gives. They may be found in Lowell's collected works. The poem Mr. Whittier contributed to the "Pioneer," in response to the request of the ambitious young editor, was "To a Friend, on her Return from Europe." Mr. Lowell's letter is mutilated, his autograph signature being cut from it in such a way as to remove the date and a few of the first words. The postmark shows it was written in October, 1842: —

. . . "January next . . . a magazine under my editorial charge. It will be called the 'Pioneer,' and it is to be a *free* magazine. I mean that it shall take a high stand in Art, and also hold itself free to advance or comment on all the great movements of the age. It is to keep up with the age and not behind it; nay, if possible, it shall run before, as its name would indicate. If the undertaking

succeeds, I shall pay authors higher than any other magazine in the land, regarding *things* and not *names*, and paying for an article's worth in spirit rather than its current value in specie. May I hope that you will send me something for my first number? Any little poem that you may have by you will be very acceptable to me. I cannot promise to pay you very much at first, for the expense of getting up such a work makes large holes in small capitals. But I trust that the hope of aiding a good endeavor will be enough to you. I am glad to see you down on the cassocked pleaders for murder in the 'Democratic Review.' Some sonnets of mine in the May number were written on reading Wordsworth in favor of bloodshed, though some parts of them were most unintelligible by the fact not being stated. I wish I were in your district to vote for you as member of Congress. But you must take my good hopes instead."

When the case of George Latimer, an alleged fugitive slave from Virginia, was on trial in Massachusetts, in 1842–43, the excitement throughout the State was intense. It was arranged by the friends of liberty that conventions should be held simultaneously in each county, and the 2d of January, 1843, was the day appointed. The convention for Essex County was held at Ipswich, and the occasion was made memorable by the reading of the intense, almost fierce, stanzas written for the occasion by John G. Whittier. It was the splendid poem, "Massachusetts to Virginia," which was printed in the "Liberator" of January 27, 1843, without the name of the author. But

as no other man *could* have written these powerful lines, the public knew at once to whom to credit them. Thomas Wentworth Higginson says that he first met Whittier at about this time, and this is his account of the meeting: —

"It was in 1843, when the excitement of the 'Latimer case' still echoed through Massachusetts, and the younger abolitionists were full of 'the joy of eventful living.' I was then nineteen, and saw the poet for the first time at an eating-house known as Campbell's, then quite a resort for reformers of all sorts. I saw before me a man of striking personal appearance; tall, slender, with olive complexion, black hair, straight black eyebrows, brilliant eyes, and an Oriental, Semitic cast of countenance. This was Whittier at thirty-five. I lingered till he rose from the table, and then advancing, I said with boyish enthusiasm and I doubt not with boyish awkwardness also, 'I should like to shake hands with the author of "Massachusetts to Virginia."' The poet, who was, and is, one of the shyest of men, broke into a kindly smile, and said briefly, 'Thy name, friend?' I gave it, we shook hands, and that was all; but to me it was like touching a hero's shield, and though I have since learned to count the friendship of Whittier as one of the great privileges of my life, yet nothing has ever displaced the recollection of that first boyish interview."

In a letter to his brother in Portland, dated February 7, 1843, Mr. Whittier says: —

"I wrote to and visited Governor Morton and got him to recommend the abolition of capital

punishment in his message [in 1840]. I shall try for it this winter, not, however, with much hope of success. Our great Latimer petition was presented to the Legislature with 62,791 names. The way we shall use up the Virginians is a caution to all kidnappers. The Legislature is ready to do anything for us; our vote for Sewall last fall did the business. [The vote for the Liberty party candidate, Samuel E. Sewall, had the effect to secure the election of the Democratic candidate, Governor Morton, for the second time. On each occasion he was elected by a vote of one, first in the popular vote, and the second time in the Legislature.] Tell Nathan Winslow that his son-in-law [Sewall] came within a hair's breadth of being governor. But for half a dozen refractory members the Whig party in the Legislature would have voted for him. . . . Our town meeting at Amesbury comes off next week. As it happens that at this time there are all over the region hereaway what are called 'revivals,' and as our Liberty party active men are mostly deacons, etc., they will be kept much at home, and the 'enemy' will be likely to prevail in one quarter while they are routing him in another. In other words, if the Devil can't get the Church, he will take the State, rather than nothing."

Mr. Whittier's acquaintance with and friendship for James T. Fields dated back to 1839, and perhaps earlier. In that year, when Whittier was collecting material for the "North Star," in Philadelphia, Fields contributed a poem for his collection. Upon Whittier's return to Massachusetts,

he found young Fields connected with the publishing house of Wm. D. Ticknor, with whom he formed a partnership in 1845. The first volume of Whittier's published by this house was "Lays of My Home, and Other Poems," which was issued in May, 1843. Whittier's correspondence in regard to the publication of this book was with Fields. In April he wrote the following letter, giving a list of the poems to be included in the book. The "John Gilpin legend" to which he refers was first published in the "North Star," the winter of 1839–40. "Lays of My Home" was the first book from the sale of which Mr. Whittier realized any remuneration, all his previous collections having been of limited circulation, or issued in aid of "the cause:" —

"In regard to the matter of publication, — I know little or nothing about it. I shall leave it altogether to you, thinking that if the work meets with a ready sale, you will do me justice, as I should, I am free to confess, like to realize something from it. Will these terms answer? . . . I send you the first articles, which will constitute about one third or quarter of the book, and give it its name, 'Lays of My Home, and Other Poems.' There are two other poems which belong to this part of the book, 'The Funeral Tree of the Sokokis,' and 'St. John.' I have no copies of them; but you will find them in the collection of friend Griswold, or in the 'Knickerbocker' for 1841, and I wish you to procure them and publish them in the following order: 1. The Merrimac; 2. The Norsemen; 3. Ballads of Cassandra Southwick;

4. The Funeral Tree of the Sokokis; 5. St. John. . . . I shall have no preface, except a single page of note or direction. I will send the residue of the copy as soon as I can catch it, for it is scattered, like the flying leaves of the Sibyl, in all directions. . . . I have two MS. poems which I think are quite as good, if not better, than any I have printed, which I shall send. I send with this 'The Exiles,' a kind of John Gilpin legend. I am in doubt about it. Read it and decide for thyself whether it is worth printing. If published it should go in after 'St. John.'"

For some reason, "The Exiles" was not published in "The Lays of My Home;" probably Mr. Fields advised against it. All the twenty-three poems in this little volume of 122 pages are retained in the latest editions of the complete works of the poet.

Thomas Macey, the hero of the ballad of "The Exiles," was a resident of Amesbury. The house in which he lived previous to 1664 is still standing, and is known as "the Obadiah Colby place." In that year he sold this house, and removed to "Amesbury Mills," the village built about the falls of the Powow. It was in 1659 that he harbored the Quakers, in defiance of the act of the General Court, passed in 1657. It was down the Powow into the Merrimac that the memorable race with the sheriff and the priest began. When Mr. Whittier wrote the ballad he evidently supposed that Macey's residence was in Haverhill, the ancient Pentucket, as is shown in the stanza: —

"By green Pentucket's southern slope
The small boat glided fast;
The watchers of the Block-house saw
The strangers as they passed."

In this ballad occurs a stanza that has puzzled some of its readers who are familiar with the scenery of the lower Merrimac: —

"Oh, beautiful! that rainbow span
O'er dim Crane-neck was bended;
One bright foot touched the eastern hills,
And one with ocean blended."

"Crane-neck" hill is on the Newbury side of the river, in such a position that the Maceys, in their boat, would not have seen the rainbow arching over it as described. Mr. Alfred Ordway, of Haverhill, informs the writer that happening to be on Job's Hill, close by the Whittier homestead, one summer afternoon, a shower came up, and after it he saw Crane-neck haloed by a rainbow precisely answering the description in the poem. He knew at once that the poet was remembering just such a scene when he wrote this stanza. From the hill of his boyhood the ocean is visible, as it could not have been from a boat in the Merrimac, and he had often seen the "bright foot" of a rainbow blending with it, while the top of the arch was over Crane-neck.

The ballad "The New Wife and the Old" is founded on one of many marvelous legends connected with the family of General Moulton, of Hampton, N. H., of whom Mr. Whittier says that he was regarded by his neighbors as a Yankee Faust, in league with the adversary. The mansion of General Moulton is still standing in Hampton,

and is pointed out to travelers on the Boston and Maine Railroad. In going westward, the hip-roofed house is seen on the left side of the track, soon after passing the Hampton station. A lady in Malden, Mass., who is the great-granddaughter of "the new wife," wrote to Mr. Whittier in 1888, asking him the source of his information, and sending him a piece of the wedding silk of her ancestress. He replied: "The story of the 'New Wife and the Old' was told me a good many years ago by an elderly lady. Since then, I have received a letter from a lady who at one time was spending the summer at the old house in Hampton. She said strange noises were heard in the rooms, the steps and rustling dress of a woman unseen on the stairs, etc., and that the servants were so frightened that Rev. Mr. Milton of Newburyport was sent for, who came and prayed, and counseled the ghosts to depart. I hope I have not, unintentionally, misrepresented General Moulton in my poem."

Between the years 1837 and 1847, a large number of Mr. Whittier's best poems, and several prose sketches, were sent by him to the "Democratic Review," published in Washington. It was to this magazine that for this decade he sent nearly all his poems that did not directly touch upon the question of slavery, and some prose sketches. It was a partisan magazine, with a large proportion of its circulation at the South, but Whittier made himself a most welcome contributor, though many a stanza expressed quite plainly his abhorrence of slavery.

The series of "Songs of Labor" was begun in the "Review," and four of them were published in 1845 and 1846. When Mr. Whittier became connected with the "National Era," he finished the series in that paper. The poem "Texas: Voice of New England" was called for by James Russell Lowell, in a letter to Whittier, dated March 21, 1844. In this letter he is urgently entreated "to cry aloud and spare not against the cursed Texas plot." Two days before this call, Lowell had published in the Boston "Courier" his "Rallying Cry for New England against the Annexation of Texas," beginning with the lines:

"Rise up, New England, buckle on your mail of proof sublime,
Your stern old hate of tyranny, your deep contempt of crime;
A plot is hatching now, more full of woe and shame
Than ever from the iron heart of bloodiest despot came."

This poem of Lowell's appeared anonymously, except that it had as a sub-head the lines, "By a Yankee." It was at the time generally supposed to have been written by Whittier, and Whittier did not then know it was Lowell's. His first guess was that Pierpont was its author. The inspiration of his own "Texas: Voice of New England" came to him at length, and he sent the poem to Lowell, as a response to his request. It was published in the "Courier" for April 17, 1844, with the following preface written by Lowell: —

A few weeks since, some verses appeared in the "Courier," which were generally ascribed to Whittier. They were not his, however. In the

present crisis of the fate of the Republic, New England listens for a trumpet-call from her Tyrtæus. Nor will she be disappointed. Whittier has always been found faithful to the Muses' holy trust. He has not put his talent out at profitable interest, by catering to the insolent and Pharisaical self-esteem of the times; nor has he hidden it in the damask napkin of historical commonplaces, or a philanthropy too universal to concern itself with particular wrongs, the practical redressing of which is all that renders philanthropy of value. Most poets are content to follow the spirit of their age, as pigeons follow a leaky grain cart, picking a kernel here and there, out of the dry dust of the past. Not so Whittier. From the heart of the onset upon the serried mercenaries of every tyranny, the chords of his iron-strung lyre clang with a martial and triumphant cheer; and where Freedom's Spartan few maintain their inviolate mountain pass against the assaults of slavery, his voice may be heard, clear and fearless, as if the victory were already won. It is with the highest satisfaction I send you the inclosed poem, every way worthy of our truly New England poet. I trust that when this meets his eye, the few words which I could not refrain from adding by way of preface will not be deemed impertinent. L.

Editor Buckingham "could not refrain" from adding, as a postscript to the poem, this note: "If any of our Southern readers should think Mr. Whittier's poem a little fierce, they will please to recollect Mr. Hayne's apology for South Carolina

nullification, — 'Something must be pardoned to the spirit of liberty!'"

The poem as first published had only twenty three-line stanzas, instead of twenty-nine as it now appears, and some of the original stanzas have been toned down. For instance, the eighteenth stanza of the first version reads: —

> "And when vengeance lights your skies,
> Hither shall ye turn your eyes,
> As the damned on Paradise!"

The corresponding stanza of the poem, as it now stands, has "clouds" for "lights" in the first line, and "lost" for "damned" in the last line. The fourteenth stanza was originally somewhat stronger than the reading adopted in all later editions: —

> "Make our Union-band a chain,
> We will snap its links in twain,
> We will stand erect again!"

This was changed in 1846 to the following: —

> "If with added weight ye strain
> On th' already breaking chain,
> Who shall bind its links again?"

This stanza now reads: —

> "Make our Union-band a chain,
> Weak as tow in Freedom's strain
> Link by link shall snap in twain."

The fifteenth stanza was remodeled with better success. In the edition of 1846 it reads: —

> "Chain of parchment! sand-wrought rope!
> Shall they bind the planet up
> Scattered o'er the heaven's blue cope?"

These lines are greatly improved in the latest revision: —

> "Vainly shall your sand-wrought rope
> Bind the starry cluster up,
> Shattered over heaven's blue cope!"

Both poems, Lowell's and Whittier's, were ablaze with an indignation that was communicated to receptive minds throughout the North, and although the hour was not yet ripe for the full political effect desired, they contributed greatly to the promotion of a feeling antagonistic to the spread of the institution of slavery over the new territory then soon to be acquired by an unjust war. Whittier had sent his poem to Lowell about the first of April, but not hearing from him, on the morning of the 17th of that month (the very day it was published in the "Courier") wrote as follows: —

"Some week or ten days ago I sent thee a piece on the Texas conspiracy, but, as I have heard nothing from it, presume thee have been absent, or that my letter failed of reaching thee. If not published, let me suggest, as the 'Courier' has already published an article on the subject, that it be sent to the 'Daily Chronicle,' Leavitt's paper. In hastily transcribing the piece, I omitted two verses, and for the life of me, as I cannot recollect the remainder, I hardly know where they belong — I *believe*, however, after the stanza ending with 'Freedom's oath.'[1] One of them thee will see is an *asinine* Scriptural allusion to him who crouched beneath burdens: —

> "'What though Issachar be strong, —
> He hath stooped beneath your wrong[2]
> Over-much and over-long!

[1] The stanza now ends "the word befitting both."

[2] The latest version is: —

> "Ye may load his back with wrong."

"'Patience with her cup o'errun,
With her weary thread outspun,
Murmurs that her work is done.

"'Make our Union-band a chain,'" etc.

"I am sorry to trouble thee with this matter. If the letter containing the piece has not been received, please write me immediately."

When the Boston mail arrived at Amesbury that day, he found his poem in the "Courier," and at once sent this note to Lowell, dated in the afternoon of the 17th: —

"I owe thee an apology for troubling thee so often with my notes; but I write now just to say that I have seen in the 'Courier' of to-day the lines I sent thee, with the too flattering comments of 'L.' I thank thee, for I value a compliment, even if it be but a compliment, from such as thyself, and if anything of mine has given thee half the pleasure which thy 'Burns,' 'Incident in a Railroad Car,' and 'Glance behind the Curtain' have given me, I shall not doubt the sincerity of thy kind words. I have read, since the lines were written, the 'Rallying Cry' over again, and as Tristram Shandy's father would say, 'I like it hugely.' It has lines which have burned into my memory. Whose is it? Pierpont's? I have half suspected *thee* of the mischief. My principal reason for writing now was to tell thee that not hearing anything from the lines I sent thee, or from thee, and coming to the conclusion that thee was absent from home, and being somewhat fearful that the iniquitous deed would be done before I could utter my protest against it (not that I

expected to silence, like another Orpheus, the Cerberus of Slavery with my rhymes, but, like Balmawhapple, when he raised his horse-pistol against the Rock of Stirling, I wished to manifest my will if not my power), — I therefore this very morning sent a copy of the poem, as near as I could recollect it, with some additional verses, to the 'Morning Chronicle' (Leavitt's new daily). I mentioned to him that I had sent a copy some time before to thee. What I chiefly regret is that I did not see the 'Courier' in season for recalling the letter to Leavitt, and I fear, therefore, that he will publish it, unless he has seen the same in the 'Courier.' The alterations will look a little odd, but I do not see how it can be helped now. But enough of this. What art thou doing in a literary way? As for myself, what with cares of all sorts on my hands, the principal charge of our weekly paper here (*weakly* would be the better word), and the trouble and responsibility of an active politician of the Liberty stamp, as well as the constant drawback of ill-health, especially since these eastern winds have been blowing, I can do little or nothing in the way of rhyme or reason. Does thee see our friend Wm. H. Burleigh's paper? I have met with it occasionally, and like it; it is manly, earnest, and gentlemanly. E. Burritt's 'Christian Citizen' will also do good."

Having responded to Lowell's call for a Texas poem, Whittier soon after returned the compliment by asking his brother poet to write a song for the celebration of West India emancipation held at Salem, August 1, 1844. This is his letter, making the request: —

"We are to have a great anti-slavery meeting at Salem, on the 1st of August, at which Gerrit Smith, of New York, and Dr. Elder, the most eloquent speaker in western Pennsylvania, are expected to be present. I think thee once promised me a Liberty song, — and I now claim it for this meeting. Give me one which shall be to our cause what the song of Rouget de Lisle was to the French Republicans, — such an one as the maiden may whisper in the

> 'Asphodel flower-fleece
> She walks ankle deep in,'

and the strong man may sing at his forge and plough. Think of it, dear L., and oblige me, and do a great work for holy Liberty, by complying with my request. Let me have it soon, that I may hand it to the committee of arrangements."

His anxiety lest the voice of Massachusetts should not be uttered with its full strength against the admission of new slave States led Whittier to accept the candidacy of the Liberty Party for representative to the General Court from Amesbury, in 1844, running unsuccessfully against both Whig and Democratic candidates.

Mr. Whittier resided several months in Lowell, in 1844, editing the "Middlesex Standard," and soon after he persuaded the proprietor of the Amesbury "Village Transcript" to change its name to the "Essex Transcript," and to make it the county organ of the Liberty party. For about two years he virtually edited the "Transcript," writing most of the original matter it contained, although his name does not appear in it, and

his service was entirely gratuitous. Mr. Stephen Lamson, who was a compositor upon the paper, says: —

"He did not pretend, or wish it understood, that he was editor of the paper; but he was its godfather, and undertook to see that it went the way it should go. He did not sign his editorials. Often sickness or absence would prevent his coming into the office for some time, and Mr. Abner L. Bayley and Rev. Mr. Strickland would take his place. This continued about four years, when the proprietor, Mr. J. M. Pettengill, sold out, and the paper became the village organ again. . . . Mr. Whittier was then a man of thirty-seven, tall, straight, and spare, with sharp, good features, handsome face, black eyes, with a long-shaped head, and a towering intellectual forehead. He wore a Quaker medium hat, as well as coat, and used his 'thees' and 'thous' in conversation. He was not a fluent talker, never put on superior airs, but assumed the commonplace in his intercourse with neighbors, friends, and the villagers generally. I remember one or two stores, kept by good friends of his, — one a Baptist deacon, the other a Friend, — where he used to visit when going to the post office; and it was his wont to sit on boxes and barrels, as we have seen them crowd together in a small village grocery store, and do his visiting, and learn the news of the day, or talk over political matters, — for in these two friends he found congenial spirits. This was one of his ways of taking recreation. In my three years' acquaintance with him, and observation of him in his

daily visits to our office to read the papers, I noticed that if something of great importance attracted his attention, he would nervously grasp a pen, and thoughts that scintillated from his brain would rush across the paper before him at a rapid rate, in a clear, smooth, running hand, that would surprise me. When the written pages went into the copy drawer, it would be found in a beautiful flowing hand, with seldom an emendation or any interlining, he held his ideas in such perfect form and control. I used to call it a 'lightning hand,' so rapidly did the pen fly over the paper. His sister used to have a literary circle to improve her young friends in various ways. My father's adopted daughter was a member of it, and was delighted to think she was worthy to belong to Miss Whittier's circle. Mr. Whittier used to lend sanction and help to these friends of his sister, and became acquainted with each one. He used always, when I saw him, to have something to say about this sister and about my father, and I was grateful for it."

In the second number of the "Standard" began his series of papers entitled "The Stranger in Lowell," afterward printed in book form. They picture the new city as seen by the stranger-poet as he wandered in his hours of leisure about the streets, and along the banks of the river which had only recently been harnessed to do the work of great manufactories. Mr. Whittier's editorial connection with the "Standard" terminated in March, 1845, but his actual residence in Lowell did not extend over a period of more than six

months. In October, 1844, he induced the Hon. C. L. Knapp, of Vermont, to come to Lowell as his assistant in conducting the paper, and gradually left it in his charge, and returned to his home in Amesbury, whence he sent occasional articles. The "Standard" was consolidated with a Worcester paper in the spring of 1845, and published in both Worcester and Lowell.

TO JOHN P. HALE.

24th 1st mo., 1845.

Permit me, although a stranger to thee personally, to express my gratitude for and heartfelt admiration of thy letter to thy constituents on the annexation of Texas. I would rather be the author of that letter than the President of the United States. Under all circumstances, it is one of the boldest and noblest words ever spoken for Liberty. May God give thee wisdom and firmness to maintain the glorious and most honorable position which thou hast taken. The clamor of party, the selfishness of office-seekers, the temporary withdrawal of popular favor, will not, I trust, move thee. The Rubicon is passed. The hand which has so bravely dashed its gauntlet at the feet of Slavery must now do manly and vigorous battle. There must be no retreat, no concession, now. On, then, to the noblest combat ever waged with Tyranny. The good and the true of all parties will bid thee Godspeed. Democracy will yet shake off the loathsome embraces of slavery. Living as I do on the borders of New Hampshire, I find that, after all, the better portion of the

Democracy believe thee to be right. The office-holders and expectants, however, make all the noise. I sent thee yesterday a copy of the "Middlesex Standard," a paper for which I write. Believe me with high respect and esteem thy friend.

In 1845, we find Mr. Whittier seriously considering a plan of going to the West to reside, but it was soon given up.

During his residence in New York, Mr. Whittier attended several meetings that were broken up by mobs, which were under the leadership of the noted Isaiah Rynders. The plan adopted by Rynders did not involve any injury to the persons of the anti-slavery orators, but he trained his followers to make boisterous disturbances, which would drown the voice of any speaker. Some of the abolition leaders were disposed to pose as martyrs, but as they were seldom in actual danger of bodily injury, Mr. Whittier used to tell them that he thought they were having a very jolly time of it for a band of martyrs. It was indeed a goodly company of able men, and if they failed to get a hearing in the halls they leased, they had a free press — often mobbed, but always maintained — and brilliant writers, whose ability commanded the attention of the whole country. Mr. Whittier used to say, when his anti-slavery co-laborers were complaining of the social and political ostracism they were suffering: "They may send us to Coventry, but we will set about making Coventry an agreeable and even a jolly place."

Mr. Whittier's correspondence with Charles

Sumner began before they had any personal acquaintance with each other. They had casually met, as we have seen, in 1829, in the office of the American "Manufacturer." But it was Sumner's brilliant Fourth of July oration upon "The True Grandeur of Nations," in 1845, that called the attention of the poet to the man who then deliberately threw aside all the alluring prospects his culture and legal attainments had opened to him, to enter upon the career of a reformer. It was a time when war was imminent between the United States and Mexico, and such a plea for Peace as this was unpopular. When Mayor Quincy was asked what he thought of the address to which he had just listened, he replied, "Cut his throat; he will never be heard of again." This was the feeling of the Boston society in which Sumner had previously been lionized. But the heart of Whittier warmed toward him, and he wrote: —

"I thank thee from my heart for thy noble address. The truths are none the less welcome for the beautiful drapery in which they are clothed. It will do great good. I would rather be the author of it than of all the war eloquence of Heathendom and Christendom combined. . . . It will, I doubt not, be republished in Europe. I shall be in Boston, at the Liberty Convention, on the 1st of next month, and shall take some pains to procure an introduction to the author of the very best plea for peace which has ever fallen under my notice."

Mr. Whittier wrote from Amesbury to his sister in Boston, under date of 26, 10th mo., 1845, a

letter which gives some idea of his anti-slavery labors in those days. Elizabeth was visiting her friend Harriet Minot Pitman: —

"Mother is at Haverhill. On Sixth day I carried her up, and then proceeded upon my mission among the abolitionists. Got to Haverhill, called on several of the 'Liberty men,' and finally held a meeting — a sort of impromptu affair — at which eloquent speeches were made by several gentlemen, Mr. Algernon Sydney Nichols among the rest. When it came to my turn I began with as much vehemence as Mr. Pickwick, but broke down about midway, and gradually subsided into a sort of melancholy monotone, which under other circumstances would have been very affecting. As it was, I am not very sanguine of its effect upon my audience, but, like Paul's unknown tongues, it at least edified myself. . . . From Haverhill I went to Bradford, called on Father P., heard his testimony against the come-outers; called on the come-outers and heard theirs against Father P., — listening with patient but non-committal civility to both, — urging all parties to forego their contentions and emulate each other in the good cause of Liberty. I then drove down to Griffin's; took dinner, and then he and I started for Newbury and Newburyport, where I trust we did good service. I had a letter a day or two ago from Hale. He is to have a great meeting at Dover on the 28th inst. Do write me a line and let me know how Harriet behaves as a housekeeper and wife, and whether thee do not think her husband deserves a good deal of sympathy! Gerrit Smith is to be in Boston

next week, and will speak, I believe, in Faneuil Hall. I wish thee could see him, but of course thee would not go to such a place. It is hard enough for a well person."

TO GERRIT SMITH.

11th mo., 1845.

There is nothing to alarm us in the overwhelming numbers of the two old parties. These parties are indeed evil and only evil, in consequence of their alliance with Slavery; but they are made up of *men*, — men with warm hearts in their bosoms, men who have consciences and moral perceptions, men who have with us a common interest in the welfare and honor of the country, men, in short, who now are just what we ourselves were a few years ago, and who can be influenced by the same truths which have had their effect on our own minds. The good and true and humane among them will soon be with us; *they are coming*, with the zeal of fresh converts, with the warm love of repentant men. I confess at times when I think of the atrocities of Slavery, and of our dear friend Torrey wearing out his life in the slaveholder's dungeon, I am almost ready to call for fire from Heaven. But better is it for us that these things, instead of calling forth idle railing on our part, stimulate us to a more faithful discharge of our duty. We are told in Scripture that when Michael, the Archangel, contended with Satan about the body of Moses, he brought against his adversary no railing accusation. Let us say to those who, like that prince of slaveholders, are

striving with God and nature for the possession of the bodies of two and a half millions of our countrymen, "The Lord rebuke you!"

To the political campaigns of the early days of the Free Soil party, Whittier's satirical pen lent a spice that was highly relished by all except the victims of his good-natured raillery. Some of the poetical sallies of those times were published anonymously, but the public soon learned that there was only one man in New England capable of producing them. While John P. Hale, at the head of the Independent Democrats of New Hampshire, aided by the Liberty party, was making the canvass that finally placed him in the United States Senate, Mr. Whittier took a lively interest in the contest, and paid off in stinging verse the insults that had been heaped upon him and George Thompson in their visit to the state capital eleven years before. At the time when "A Letter" appeared in the "Boston Chronotype," in 1846, the public was so familiar with the names and doings of the politicians satirized that explanatory notes were not needed. Whittier did not openly acknowledge the "Letter" as his own until the publication of his complete works in 1888, more than forty years after it was written, and such notes were added as were needed to explain the satire to the present generation.

TO JOHN P. HALE.

16th 9th mo., 1846.

I see by the papers that thy lecture in Faneuil Hall takes place on the 18th. There is one point

which I wish to call thy attention to. We want some common ground for all who love Liberty and abhor Slavery to unite upon. May it not be found in the following: —

1. Abolition of slavery the leading and paramount political question.

2. No voting for slaveholders.

3. No voting for men who are in political fellowship with slaveholders.

Why can we not have a great League of Freedom, with the above for its watchwords and rallying cry? We have eighty thousand Liberty voters to begin with, and a majority of both the old parties are well-nigh ready to join in such a movement. Think of it. I notice that the English Liberal papers, Birmingham "Pilot," London "Non-Conformist," etc., have an eye on the New Hampshire movement, and think of it as a most encouraging fact in favor of the Rights of Man. In the late meeting of the British Anti-Slavery Society, Joseph Sturge, the President of the Free Suffrage Union, alluded to thy course with great satisfaction. The Editor of the "Democratic Record" has spoken of Sturge as the noblest and purest of the democracy of England.

The tribute to the memory of N. P. Rogers, written by Mr. Whittier in 1847, which appears in his prose works, shows the warmth of his attachment to that most brilliant of the early anti-slavery editors. One of the first letters of appreciation and encouragement Whittier received after publishing the pamphlet "Justice and Expediency,"

in 1833, was from Rogers, who invited him to his mountain home in the valley of the Pemigewasset. Their first personal acquaintance was two years afterward, when Whittier, accompanied by George Thompson (whom he had been hiding from the mob in the seclusion of his East Haverhill home), drove to Plymouth, N. H., and had a most cordial and hospitable reception. Thompson considered Rogers the most brilliant man he had met in America. The friendship thus begun was for a few years (from 1840 to 1846) clouded by the contest to which reference has elsewhere been made, growing out of the fact that Whittier could not follow the policy of Garrison and Rogers, in actively supporting several reforms not necessarily connected with the anti-slavery movement, and they could not follow him into the field of politics. But in the early summer of 1846, Mr. Whittier learned that Rogers was ill, had met with losses of property and friends, and he wrote him a letter full of hearty sympathy. To this letter he received a prompt reply, dated Concord, June 8, 1846, and a short extract from it may be found in Whittier's tribute to his memory referred to above.

It will be seen that up to 1847 Mr. Whittier's labors upon nearly all the newspapers he had edited had been interfered with and suspended on account of the delicacy of his health. From none of them had he received a salary exceeding five hundred dollars a year; and yet he had managed, with the help of small sums paid for his services as secretary of anti-slavery societies, to support

himself and the family dependent upon him, without incurring debt. Neither his books nor his poems had been a source of income to him, although his name had become well known throughout the country as a poet, as well as a reformer operating in the field of politics. His eye had been single to the cause he had espoused, and all his powers had been concentrated upon it. The North was ringing with his passionate outbursts against slavery, and the Liberty party he had helped to organize had begun to trouble the old parties, as it was at times holding the balance of power between them. It had been decided by the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, which had not been successful with the newspaper organs it had established in New York, to start a weekly paper in Washington, that should commend itself to the public by its literary as well as its political character. A fund was raised that would insure its publication one year, and the management of it was confided to Dr. Gamaliel Bailey, who had been for eleven years editing the Cincinnati "Philanthropist," the first anti-slavery paper published in the West, founded by James G. Birney, in 1836. This paper, says Grace Greenwood, was issued with regularity, during mob intervals. Three times its office was sacked, press and types thrown into the Ohio, and all concerned in its publication threatened with outrage and death. In 1841 the city was disgraced by wild pro-slavery riots, the fury of the mob, when presses gave out, being vented on colored people. The fourth press stood, for Salmon P. Chase and Tom Corwin, then gov-

ernor of the State, stood beside it and protected it. Dr. Bailey began the publication of the "Era" in January, 1847, and the next year he confronted a terrible mob in Washington with the same spirit he had displayed in Cincinnati. For three days his office was besieged, but the city had an efficient mayor, and he was protected. Leading citizens, however, urged the doctor to restore peace to the city and secure his own safety by pledging himself to discontinue the "Era," and surrender his press to the mob. He refused to surrender any right he possessed as an American citizen. On the night of the third day, his house was besieged. He sent his children and servants to a place of safety, and with his wife confronted the angry populace. When called upon to surrender, he came out upon the front steps and stood there, a fair mark for pistol shots. He said, "I am Dr. Bailey. What is your wish?" The surrender of his property was demanded, the alternative being a coat of tar and feathers, the materials for which were paraded before him. He asked to be heard in his own defense, and made a speech that completely changed the feeling of the mob. He was not afterwards threatened with violence.

A position was now offered Mr. Whittier which would permit him to do all his literary work at his home in Amesbury, under conditions more favorable for his health than was possible away from the ministrations of his devoted mother and sister. With his editorial labors, home cares, and other demands, he was very closely occupied, and it is pleasant to find him in the autumn of 1847 taking

a little rest with his Cartland cousins, at Lee, N. H., whence Elizabeth writes to her cousin Gertrude Whittier: "Just a week ago Greenleaf and I came over here. It is quiet and lovely all about. There was never a season of such glorious fall fruitage, and from my windows the view is beautiful — the greenness of June crowning these September woods and fields. I wish thee could join us this morning, there are so few of us, and I have strong family ties. I should never object to the plan of *clanship*, only I would like to exclude a few. Greenleaf has a prospect of being at the Buffalo convention, and, as it now seems, thy own great-hearted townsman, John P. Hale, will be our candidate for the Presidency."

In September, 1846, at a Whig convention in Faneuil Hall, Stephen C. Phillips offered an anti-slavery resolve which was rejected, and this resolve was defended in a speech by Charles Sumner. Whittier wrote his poem "The Pine Tree" immediately upon reading the proceedings of this convention. It contains the lines: —

"Where 's the *man* for Massachusetts! where 's the voice to speak her free?
Where 's the hand to light up bonfires from the mountain to the sea?
Beats her Pilgrim pulse no longer? Sits she dumb in her despair?
Has she none to break the silence? Has she none to do and dare?
O my God! for one right worthy to lift up her rusted shield,
And to plant again the Pine Tree in her banner's tattered field!"

This poem he inclosed in a note to Charles Sumner, which reads as follows: —

"I have just read the proceedings of your Whig convention, and the lines inclosed are a feeble ex-

pression of my feelings. I look upon the rejection of S. C. P.'s resolutions as an evidence that the end and aim of the managers of the convention was to go just far enough to scare the *party*, and no further. All thanks for the free voices of thyself, Phillips, Allen, and Adams. Notwithstanding the result, you have not spoken in vain. If thee thinks well enough of these verses hand them to the 'Whig' or 'Chronotype.'"

To this letter Sumner replied: —

"We do not despair. We are all alive to wage the fight another day, and feel that more was done than we had hoped to do. Our vote was strong; but it was at an hour when many had gone home by the early trains, whose presence would have made it stronger. Many who were present did not vote, and they were undoubtedly with us. The ball has been put in motion; it cannot be stopped. Hard words are said of us in State Street. I am grateful to you for your note of encouragement. The poem is beautiful, and must be printed."

The following letters, written as he was entering upon his connection with the paper, indicate also his activity in political affairs.

TO JOHN P. HALE.

12th mo., 18, 1846.

We are about starting our "National Era" at Washington, and should be glad of a note of encouragement from thee. Is it asking too much to request thee to drop me a line, as one of the editors, to this effect? We shall have similar letters

from others for our first number. We mean to make the paper worthy of the best of causes, — the cause of humanity, the Democracy of the New Testament. So the pro-slavery Democrats have troubles yet in their Israel. Who is Esquire Marston? Is he a man to stick to his point and show fight? . . . Webster and his two hopeful sons, I see, are going for the war. Your New Hampshire Whigs were in too much of a hurry to nominate him.

TO ANN E. WENDELL.

2d mo., 21, 1847.

What a sad state of things in Ireland! We have been trying to do something in this region. Our little meeting here has raised about fifty dollars. The people of other denominations are also moving. The cheerfulness with which almost everybody contributes to this object looks well for human nature. Oh, surely there is good in all; the hardest heart is not wholly stone. The heart that can sympathize with human suffering and yearn to relieve it cannot be wholly depraved. The longer I live, I see the evil in myself in a clearer light, and more that is good in others; and if I do not grow better, I am constrained to be more charitable. I shudder sometimes at my fierce rebukes of erring-doers, when I consider my own weakness and sins of omission as well as commission. . . . Our paper at Washington [the "National Era"] will doubtless succeed. I should have gone on this winter but for the state of my health, and the difficulty of leaving home on my mother's account. I write but little for it,

and have not been able to revise or correct that little. But, if in the Providence of God I am not to do much more for the cause of freedom, I am deeply grateful for the privilege I have enjoyed of giving the strength of my youth and manhood to it. The cause is destined to triumph; and present appearances indicate that the triumph is near. . . . The action of the Pennsylvania legislature in relation to fugitive slaves is most gratifying. The exertions of the Committee of the Meeting for Sufferings undoubtedly contributed much to this result. Oh, that our Friends generally would feel their great responsibility in this matter. They have influence sufficient to change the whole legislation of the country, if it was only fully exercised. . . . I have of late been able to write but little, and that mostly for the papers, and I have scarcely answered a letter for a month past. I dread to touch a pen. Whenever I do it increases the dull wearing pain in my head, which I am scarcely ever free from. . . . I was very sorry to hear of thy mother's illness. Mother! how much there is in that word! If there is one earthly blessing for which more than another I feel thankful, it is that she is still spared to me to whom I can apply that endearing name.

TO JOHN P. HALE.

30th 7th mo., 1847.

Inclosed is a letter prepared and signed by a committee chosen at our conference the other day at East Boston. Farther reflection has convinced me that so far from throwing obstacles in thy way in the Senate the nomination would give a much

stronger position, and besides it would have the effect to set at rest the stories of the Radicals and the fears of some of the Independent Democrats in other States, that thou art playing into the hands of the Whigs; and thus thou wouldst be able to act more effectively upon the people, irrespective of party. As for the Whigs, depend upon it they will have no cause of dissatisfaction, if they see that thy new position enables thee more effectively to act upon the pro-slavery Democracy. Show them this, and they will not complain. I am naturally anxious that thy answer should be such a one as shall render the vote for thee in our convention entirely unanimous. It will not be published, but will be used at the convention, and sent in manuscript to a few of our leading friends in other States.

Pardon me for a suggestion or two. It is important that it should be understood that thou art disconnected entirely from the two old parties; at the same time it would be right and proper for thee to avow thy Democratic faith in the doctrines of Jefferson, Leggett, and Sedgwick — the true and righteous democracy of Christianity. In regard to thy anti-slavery views: Perhaps if thou wast to copy the principal resolutions of the Newmarket convention, held a year ago, as expressive of thy sentiments, it would be well. Thee might close by avowing these as thy principles, and that if they coincide with those of the gentlemen addressing thee, and their friends generally, they are at liberty to use thy name at the convention. I take it for granted that thy answer will be favor-

able. The whole West will be shaken by thy nomination. Dr. Bailey is sure of great accessions from the Democratic and Whig ranks. We will try for twenty thousand votes in Massachusetts alone, and unless all indications are fallacious shall get them. If agreeable to thee, I will ride over to Dover with friend Tuck, at such time as may suit thy convenience — only let it be soon as possible — and we can see thy answer, and perhaps make some suggestions previous to its being sent. Or, I will meet thee at the Cartlands' at Lee; or, still better, wilt thou not ride over to Amesbury? . . . The Whigs of New Hampshire, if they are looking for anything better than a slaveholder for candidate, will be disappointed. Taylor will be urged by the hurrah boys of both parties, at the North and by the entire South. I have more hope of the Democrats than of the Whigs in the coming election. They are bolder, freer, and less influenced by conservatism. Still the young Whigs of Massachusetts and Ohio will unquestionably vote the Liberty ticket, with thee as the candidate.

TO THE SAME.

2d 10th mo., 1847.

Ere this I suppose the result of the convention at Buffalo has reached thee. If not already, thou wilt soon be officially informed of it, when it will be expected of thee that thy position will be defined. In thy case, the boldest course is the safest. The Whigs are training Corwin and McLean to go as far as possible towards Liberty principles without actually reaching them. They will strive

to make it appear that they are more ultra than the anti-slavery candidate himself. On the other hand, the New York and western Democrats are preparing to bring out either Benton or C. C. Cambreling, or John A. Dix, as the opponent of slavery extension. The two latter are prepared to go great lengths in denunciation of slavery. The Whigs of New Hampshire will as readily go for an ultra-abolitionist, as a half one, while they would be glad of the excuse for going for Corwin or Judge McLean, that they were ready to go farther than thyself in opposition to slavery. A bold, thorough-going letter at this time from thy pen would awaken too deep an interest and enthusiasm among all classes of anti-slavery men to be set aside by the stratagems of the two old parties. I trust thee will not permit thyself to be troubled with "constitutional" difficulties. The Constitution has been a mere ruse of war in the hands of Slavery for half a century. It has been made to say and be just what the South wished. We must take it out of the custody of slavery, and construe it in the light of Liberty, — "as we understand it." We must bring it up out of the land of bondage, just as David did the ark from the Philistines to Obed-Edom. At all events, with the Constitution, or without the Constitution, *Slavery must die.* If, however, on full reflection, thou art not prepared to take the difficult and trying position proffered thee, I would not ask thee to accept the nomination. If it seems on the whole better and wiser for thee to enter the Senate entirely independent of all parties, I would not urge thee to take upon

thyself the responsibility we offer thee. I am sorry the nomination was made this fall. At our Essex County meeting, held the week before, I procured the passage of a resolution suggesting that deference should be had to the opinion of our friends in New Hampshire and Ohio in respect to deferring the nomination, and wrote the convention to that effect, being unable to attend. I have volunteered this hasty letter from motives which I trust thou wilt appreciate. Were I not confined by ill health to my house, I should try to see thee. As it is, I could do no less than drop thee a line expressive of my feelings. Thy letter will be looked for with great interest. If it is, as I trust it will be, bold, pointed, and explicit, — if it not only sustains the Wilmot Proviso, but, looking beyond that temporary measure, aims at the life of slavery itself, and points out the duty of the Free States in this crisis, to make the anti-slavery question first and paramount, — it will rally a mighty host of true hearts around thee as Liberty's standard-bearer. If it fall short of this, it will be greatly to be regretted, and by no one more sincerely, both as respects thyself and the cause, than by thy sincere friend.

TO THE SAME.

11th 8th mo., 1847.

I wrote thee a hasty line the other day with reference to the Buffalo nomination. I sincerely hope thou wilt not feel thyself called upon to decline that nomination. Since I wrote thee I have had letters from New York and elsewhere, all

highly animated, and encouraging as to the prospect of a large vote in 1848. Everywhere the nomination is received with enthusiasm by the Liberty men; and many influential Whigs and Democrats are regarding it with favor. The "Era" of last week contains an article originating in a Democratic paper in New York, and which has been copied into several other prints of the same stamp, suggesting that it would be well for the Democracy of the North to rally under thy nomination. Everything, in short, looks favorable, beyond our hopes. Our election took place to-day. When I left the polls the governor vote was not declared. That for representative in Amesbury stood, Liberty 103, Whig 99, Democratic 87. The Cushing vote will be small.

Mr. Whittier began his work as corresponding editor of the "National Era" with the first number issued, and continued in this position until 1860, a few months after the death of his associate and friend, Dr. Bailey. During the first years of his connection with the "Era" his contributions were to be found in nearly every number, and related to a great variety of subjects. They included poems that are still regarded as his best; reviews of work of his brother authors; comments upon public affairs, sometimes quite elaborate; letters from Amesbury and Boston about the progress of the cause in New England; and quaint and curious results of antiquarian research. He did not occupy any particular department, but his articles were scattered about the paper, in editorial or other

columns, as it might happen, usually signed with his initials. The first number contained his noble tribute to "Randolph of Roanoke," a sketch of the life of Thomas Ellwood, and a letter from Amesbury, dealing with New Hampshire politics and rejoicing in the gallant and successful fight of John P. Hale. He likened Hale to the brave-hearted Indian, Hiarcormes, who trampled on the sacred medicine bag, and thus broke the spell of the medicine man who was frightening the converts of Eliot back to idolatry. "Hale's experiment was in its way equal to that of old Hiarcormes. Slavery has come to be regarded a very sacred and democratic institution, to interfere with which was to incur political death. Hale has rudely touched it, and still lives."

There is occasionally a number of the "Era" that contains eight or nine columns of Mr. Whittier's writing. One after another he introduces to the public, with eulogistic comment, young writers who have since become popular favorites. Now it is a good word for Lucy Larcom, then for Alice and Phœbe Cary, Grace Greenwood, and others. These became regular contributors to the "Era." His life-long friendship for Bayard Taylor had its origin in his copying "The Norseman's Ride" from the "Democratic Review" (in which it had appeared anonymously), prefacing it with hearty commendation. He did not then know the name of the writer he was praising, nor could he have guessed that his notice would be the beginning of a long and happy friendship.

We find among the papers Mr. Whittier pre-

served with care the first letter he received from his young friend, whose work he had praised, written from Phœnixville, Pa., September 16, 1847: —

I know you will understand the feeling which prompts me, though a stranger, to address you, and pardon any liberties I may have taken in so doing. I was surprised and delighted a few weeks ago to see in the "National Era," in connection with a notice of the old Northern mythology, a poem of mine, "The Norseman's Ride," which was published last winter in the "Democratic Review." I am an enthusiastic admirer of the stirring Scandinavian Sagas, some of which Tegnér has immortalized in his Frithiof; and it was under the full influence of the spirit inspired by them that the poem was written. I was *possessed* by the subject and fancied I had given it fitting expression, but the friends to whom I showed it did not admire it, and I reluctantly concluded that my heated fancies had led my judgment astray, and made up my mind to forget it. Judge, then, how grateful and encouraging was your generous commendation. I thank you sincerely and from my heart for the confidence your words have given me. One day, I hope, I shall be able to take your hand, and tell you what happiness it is to be understood by one whom the world calls by the sacred name of poet. With every wish for your happiness and prosperity, I am, with sincere respect and esteem,

Your friend, J. Bayard Taylor.

In examining files of the "Era" we come frequently upon poems that were adding steadily and cumulatively to the reputation of their author, like "Barclay of Ury," "Angels of Buena Vista," "Maud Muller," "Angel of Patience," "The Crisis," "The Hill-Top," "A Sabbath Scene," "Burns," "Mary Garvin," "Tauler," "The Hermit's Chapel" (afterwards called "Chapel of the Hermits"), and "The Prisoners of Naples." A few weeks after Webster's 7th of March speech, the terrible poem "Ichabod" is seen at the head of a conspicuous column. That number of the "Era" (May 2, 1850) must have caused a sensation in Washington. Daniel Webster responded to it indirectly by a letter to certain citizens of Newburyport, in reply to an address by Horace Mann. In this letter he said that the views expressed in his 7th of March speech were approved *by the great body of the Society of Friends*. Whittier's reply to the claim is in the "Era" of June 20, and in it he makes peremptory denial of the statement, and brings forward conclusive proof that the Quakers as a body disapprove of Webster's position. In this article he speaks for the Friends in New England, and in the next paper he says: —

"It has been suggested, that whatever might be our opinion, or that of the Friends of New England, we had no right to speak for those of Pennsylvania, to whom the author of the letter may be supposed to refer more immediately. We have, however, abundant proofs of the correctness of our statement, as applied to Pennsylvania Friends.

It is notorious that for the last half century the latter have been the friends and advisers of the colored people; and whenever a slave case was before the courts of law they have been found standing between the oppressors and the oppressed; and when the decision was against the latter, they have submitted only with the deepest sympathy for the slave, and abhorrence of the law which consigned him to hopeless bondage."

He quotes Webster's assertion that fugitives are arrested and carried away into slavery from Pennsylvania without complaint or excitement, and shows by extracts from Quaker periodicals and minutes of the Yearly Meeting that the Friends in that State were profoundly stirred by the attempt to repeal the state law granting jury trial to fugitive slaves. His two years' residence in Pennsylvania had qualified him to speak for that State as well as Massachusetts.

Mr. Whittier's second visit to Washington was in December, 1845, when, in company with Henry Wilson, he was delegated by a Liberty party convention to carry to Congress a petition containing 60,000 names against the annexation of Texas. It was after a visit to a slave prison in that city that he wrote the poem "At Washington."

He again visited Washington in February, 1848, and a few days before the death of John Quincy Adams had an interview with that statesman, of which he gave some account in the "Era" of April 13. Adams said he longed to see our government take a step which would place a seal of national disapprobation on the institution of

slavery. On the 23d of February, the very day of the death of Adams, Whittier wrote to Charles Sumner from Washington as follows : —

" Ere this thou hast doubtless heard of the sudden illness of the venerable Adams. At a late hour last night he was still living, but sinking fast. I have not heard this morning. His death will be the fitting end of such a glorious life. Falling at his post, dying with his harness on, in the capitol so often shaken by his noble battle for freedom! My eyes fill with tears, but the emotion is not unmingled with a feeling of joy that such a man should thus pass from us. A few days ago I had a highly interesting conversation with him. All his old vigor seemed to reanimate him when he touched the subject of slavery. I shall never forget that interview. Even if now living, he cannot survive through the day. . . . An election will of course take place in his district. There is a feeling among our friends here that his place should be worthily filled. Who so proper, then, as his son, Charles Francis Adams? He is virtually a resident of the district. Think of it, dear S., — think what a glorious thing it would be to see the vacant seat of the elder Adams so well filled. . . . Look at the article in the 'Era' this week on Yucatan. I have had an opportunity to acquaint myself with the object of the Yucatan commissioner. Cannot the fact of the rejection of his overtures for the admission of a *free* State be used in favor of liberty, and against the doughfaces of the North?"

The article upon Yucatan to which reference is

made affirms that the administration turned a cold shoulder upon Yucatan, because the constitution of that State prohibits slavery. After his return to Amesbury, in March, 1848, Mr. Whittier wrote in commendation of a letter by Horace Mann, then member of Congress from Massachusetts, saying he does not know Mann, and asking if he is really all that his letter indicates. Sumner's reply must have been satisfactory, for Whittier writes: —

"I am glad to hear thy report of Horace Mann. I trust he will equal thy hopes. . . . What a glorious change in the Old World. I feel almost like going to France myself, and would if I could do anything more than gratify my own feelings by so doing. The position of Lamartine, Arago, and their colleagues, is a sublime one, but its responsibility is terrible. My friend Joseph Sturge, of Birmingham, who has just returned from a visit to Paris, places great confidence in them. He writes me that they are determined to put an end to slavery at once. He found them busily at work, greatly worn and prostrated by their severe and protracted labors. The sympathy of all friends of liberty should be with them. I wish our legislature, in its congratulations of France, would specially allude to the abolition of slavery. I have not seen whether the resolves have passed or not. 'Hale's proviso' ought to be attached to them." [1]

[1] When the United States Senate was considering the resolutions congratulating France upon securing a republican form of government, in April, 1848, Senator Hale moved to insert a clause commending the French government for "manifesting the sincerity of their purpose by instituting measures for the immediate

Here is an earnest letter of advice given in the political crisis of 1848, when the Whig party was divided over the nomination of Zachary Taylor. The "Cotton" Whigs went for Taylor, and the "Conscience" Whigs had called a convention to decide upon the course they should adopt. Whittier wrote to Sumner from Amesbury, June 20: —

"In the mean time, what will the New York Barnburners do? Is there no hope of uniting with them, and erecting on the ruins of the old parties the great party of Christian Democracy and Progress? Why try to hold on to these old parties, even in name? . . . It strikes me that it would be best not to make a nomination at Worcester, but to appoint delegates to a general convention of the friends of Freedom and Free Soil, without distinction of party, the time and place of which not to be fixed before consultation with friends of the movement in other States. Don't stultify yourselves by boasting of your Whiggery. That died when Taylor was nominated. Judge Allen is right: the Whig party is dissolved. Let your emancipated friends now rise to the sublime altitude of men who labor for the race, for humanity. Send out from your convention, if you will, a long and careful statement of the facts in the case, but with it also an appeal to the people which shall reach and waken into

emancipation of the slaves in all the colonies of the republic." The American Senate, at this time, was hardly in the mood to consider this proposition seriously. Samuel S. Phelps, of Vermont, was the only Senator who stood by Hale in voting for it. This was the "proviso" to which Whittier referred in his letter to Sumner, as one that the state legislature ought to adopt.

vigorous life all that remains of weakness in the North. Kindle up the latent enthusiasm of the Yankee character, call out the grim fanaticism of the Puritan. Dare! *dare!* DARE! as Danton told the French; that is the secret of successful revolt. Oh, for a man! There is the difficulty, after all. Who is to head the movement? Hale has many of the martial qualities of a leader. As a stump orator he is second only to John Van Buren, who, by the bye, I would far rather see in nomination for the Presidency than his father, or Judge McLean. It would be folly and suicide to nominate a shrinking conservative, whose heart is not with you, and whom you must drag up to your level by main force. . . . You must have a new and bold man, one to whom old notions and practices on the question of slavery are like threads of tow, breaking with the first movement of his limbs. But this advice, however well-meant on my part, is doubtless not needed. You have strong and noble men, — Adams, Howe, Phillips, Wilson, Hoar, Allen, and others. I only wish you had the power of the French provisional government; I could answer for the wisdom of your decrees."

In his reply to this letter Sumner said: —

"Things tend to Van Buren as our candidate; I am willing to take him. With him we can break the slave power: that is our first aim. We can have a direct issue on the subject of slavery. We hope that McLean will be Vice-President. Truly, success seems to be within our reach. I never supposed that I should belong to a successful party."

On the 6th of December, 1848, Sumner wrote to Whittier, whose poem "The Wish of To-Day" had just appeared in the "Era:" —

"Your poem in the last 'Era' has touched my heart. May God preserve you in strength and courage for all good works! . . . The literature of the world is turning against slavery. We shall have it soon in a state of moral blockade. I admire Dr. Bailey as an editor very much. His articles show infinite sagacity and tact. . . . But I took my pen merely to inquire after your health. There are few to whom I would allot a larger measure of the world's blessings than to yourself, had I any control, for there are few who deserve them more."

The attitude taken by Whittier in the strait through which the political movement against slavery passed in the formation of the Free Soil party, at the time of the Buffalo convention of 1848, is shown in the following letter to Dr. Wm. F. Channing, who was an alternate delegate from Boston to the convention. It was dated July 1, 1848. Whittier's suggestion that Channing should write to Van Buren was adopted, but the wily ex-President made no reply: —

"Providence permitting, I will be with you on the 19th. In the mean time I can only add that I cannot vote for Van Buren in his present attitude, yet I greatly fear that the Buffalo convention will affirm his nomination, and that Hale will decline, as indeed he has a right to do when his party abandon him. What can be done? Van Buren is too old a sinner to hope for his conversion. Had the

Barnburners nominated John Van Buren, I would have gone for him, for he is not bound to vindicate his consistency in evil, and he is a man of *progress*. Even now, if the Conscience Whigs so will it, he might be substituted for his father, and thus all parties might unite. I see no other way. As things now stand we are likely to lose our candidate, for self-respect alone and self-preservation would induce him to withdraw his name from a divided and dissolving party.

"Would it not be well for some one — I think thee are the very person to do it — to address an earnest letter to Martin Van Buren, stating the strong desire felt to effect a union of all parties opposed to the usurpations of slavery — putting the question plainly to him whether he is willing and prepared to stand at the head of such a movement, and give his sanction to all legal and constitutional means for the limitation and overthrow of slavery. Write to him in behalf of eighty thousand Liberty voters. It is important that we should know positively how he stands. The Whigs generally, I think, will prefer Van Buren to Hale, strange as it may seem. For one, I cannot and will not go blindly and rashly into the support of such a candidate as Van Buren — let Conscience Whigs and Western Liberty men do as they will."

TO MOSES A. CARTLAND.

27th 7th mo., 1848.

I would like to go to the Buffalo convention, but my health forbids the idea. What will be done there? I would go for Van Buren — if Hale de-

cline — if he would come out in favor of abolition in the District of Columbia. But I will never vote for him until I know that he has taken a new position on that point. How we should look if Van Buren were elected by our votes, and should veto a bill to abolish the most infernal slave market this side of Tophet! No, no. I will vote alone before I will so stultify myself and disgrace the cause. I give Van Buren all due credit for his stand against the extension of slavery; but if we may judge by his own letter, while all the world has been making progress in liberal principles, he remains just where he was in 1836. If the Buffalo convention are wise they will nominate John P. Hale; or if not, compel Van Buren or his friends for him to define his position. After having been brayed in the mortar of slavery he must be stupider than Solomon's fool if he is still disposed to act the part of a "Northern man with Southern principles." The Free Soil movement — the *animus* of it — the spirit and life which it infuses into the people — is indeed glorious. I hope much from it, and will do all I can to urge it forward. How nobly Hale behaves! His last speech is spoken of as admirable in the New York papers. I wish the Barnburners could be induced to go for him.

TO GRACE GREENWOOD.

5th mo., 10, 1849.

We have had a dreary spring — a gray haze in the sky — a dim, beam-shorn sun — a wind from the northeast, cold as if sifted through all the ices of frozen Labrador, as terrible almost as that chill

wind which the old Moslem fable says will blow over the earth in the last days. The birds hereabout have a sorry time of it, as well as "humans." There are now, however, indications of a change for the better. The blossoms of the peach and cherry are just opening, and the arbutus, anemones, and yellow violets are making glad and beautiful the banks of our river. I feel daily like thanking God for the privilege of looking upon another spring. I have written very little this spring, — the "Legend of St. Mark" is all in the line of verse that I have attempted. I feel a growing disinclination to pen and ink. Over-worked and tired by the long weary years of the anti-slavery struggle, I want mental rest. I have already lived a long life, if thought and action constitute it. I have crowded into a few years what should have been given to many.

In 1849, Joseph Sturge, the eminent English philanthropist, proposed to Mr. Whittier through Lewis Tappan that he visit England, offering to pay all the expenses of the journey. Mr. Whittier replied to Mr. Tappan, under date of July 14, 1849: —

"I have been spending some weeks in the northern part of New Hampshire, and thy kind note relative to our friend Sturge's proposition, receives my earliest notice on my return. I wish it were possible for me to avail myself of so generous an offer; but in my present very weak state of health, I could be of no real service to the cause, without making exertions to which my strength is

inadequate. If I could visit Europe as a mere looker-on, careless and indifferent in respect to the great questions which agitate it, I might possibly be benefited by it. But this I cannot do, and I can ill bear any additional excitement. But, believe me, I feel none the less grateful to our dear and generous friend Sturge, and to thyself for your kindness.

"I am glad to hear that thou art now a 'free laborer' in the cause of freedom, and peace, and humanity. I have often marveled at the vast amount of labor performed by thee in addition to thy daily and engrossing business, in behalf of these objects; and for thy sake as well as for theirs, I am glad thou art able to bear what Charles Lamb calls 'the dull drudgery of the desk's hard wood.' Thou wilt, I apprehend, find no lack of occupation. The church is not yet right on the question of slavery. The nominal orthodoxy of the land has sorely suffered through the conduct of its leaders in opposing the cause of practical righteousness. No man can do more than thyself to change this state of things. The Free Mission movement has already done immense good; the old boards will all be compelled soon to take the same ground and maintain it.

"Then in the matter of political action, strong as is my confidence in the good intentions of the great mass of Free Soilers, and well satisfied as I am with the result of their labors thus far, I am not without fear that they may be drawn into some unworthy compromise. We need all thy vigilance and wisdom to keep us straight in the line of prin-

ciple. I do not fear for the integrity of the old Liberty men, the mob-tried, church-censured confessors of '35 and '36. They may get off the track now and then, but their instincts will set them right. But we are now all abolitionists; it is as difficult to find an open pro-slavery man now as it was in '33 to find an anti-slavery one; yet I have scarcely charity enough to suppose that this marvelous conversion is altogether genuine and heartfelt. The responsibilities of the cause never rested heavier on the genuine old-fashioned abolitionists than at this time. I feel extremely anxious about the result of the attempt to unite the Barnburners with the old Hunkers in your State. If they can come together on the basis of the Vermont resolutions I shall hope for the best.

"The next Congress will settle the California and New Mexico question. I look forward with hope not wholly unmingled with fear. Can thee not spend a few weeks at Washington this winter? Depend upon it, there will be ample opportunity for the profitable exercise of all thy powers. Dr. Bailey [of the 'National Era'] is confined to his office; there must be some one always there to supply the members with necessary facts, for they are all sadly ignorant in this matter. But alas, I am laying out work for others, while I am myself well-nigh powerless! What Providence has in store for me I know not, but my heart is full of thankfulness that I have been permitted to do something for the cause of humanity, and that with all my sins and errors I have not been suffered to live wholly for myself.

"I saw the Rogers family at Plymouth. They spoke of thee with affectionate warmth. Kind, gifted, amiable, they have all the pleasant traits of their father; but the conduct of some of the church and clergy in respect to him has made them skeptical, and prejudiced them against the forms of religious observances."

In 1848, after the Buffalo convention that nominated Van Buren, the Liberty party had high hopes from the division of the Democratic party in New York, and Whittier wrote his "Pæan" with the feeling that the North was at last thoroughly aroused, and that the encroachments of slavery would be stopped. But it was found that the North was not quite ready for a full revolt. It was necessary to fill the measure of its humiliation by the passage of the fugitive slave law; and even that was not enough, as the event proved.

The "Era" had become self-supporting in the first year of its existence. Some of its readers objected to the stories, sketches of travel, and poems that had no reference to the cause in which they were interested, but Dr. Bailey informed them that it was this literary element that kept the enterprise afloat, and he should continue to draw upon it. Of course, there was no complaint from any anti-slavery reader, while "Uncle Tom's Cabin, or Life among the Lowly," was appearing as a serial, in 1851–52. Even readers principled against novels could not resist the fascination of that remarkable story, which was coming out in weekly installments, while the operations of the fugitive slave law were exciting a deep feeling of

indignation throughout the North. Whittier's charming sketch of character and manners in the ancient times of New England, which, while it was appearing in the "Era," had for its title, "Stray Leaves from Margaret Smith's Diary, in the Colony of Massachusetts," was published as a serial in 1848, and was reprinted in book form in 1849, with the title "Margaret Smith's Journal." While this volume was in press, Mr. Whittier wrote the following letter to J. T. Fields, in regard to a proposed portrait of Rebecca Rawson, and the matter of following the ancient system of capitalization, which had been adopted in the original publication of the work as a serial in the "Era," but was discarded in the book. The letter was dated December 12, 1848:

"I send herewith the engraving of R. Rawson, taken after her abandonment by her husband. She was about twenty-one when married, and about thirty-five when she died. The picture represents her at the latter age. As an authentic picture of the heroine of the 'Journal' it might be well to have it in the book. I begin to have some fears that the capitals will be a little too thick for a handsome page. It was not an invariable rule to use them at that time — in fact there was no rule about it. You can scarce find two books of the middle of the seventeenth century alike in spelling and lettering. Just get a proof of one or two pages, and see how it looks. If it is likely to disfigure the page, strike out most of them, and let us have the more important words capitalized."

As originally published in the "Era," the episode

of the wandering Milesian schoolmaster, O'Shane, with his ballad "Kathleen," does not appear in this story. It was sent to Mr. Fields to be inserted when the book was in press, and three of the best stanzas were an afterthought, as will be seen by the following letter, dated January 3, 1849: —

"That rascally old ballad occurred to my mind last evening, and it struck me that it wanted something, although already too long. The following verses might do to follow (I quote from memory) the verse

> "'He tore his beard so gray;
> But he was old and she was young,
> And so she had her way'—
>
> "Sure that same night the Banshee howled
> To fright the evil dame,
> And fairy folks who loved Kathleen
> With funeral torches came.
>
> "She watched them gleaming through the trees,
> And glimmering down the hill;
> They crept before the dead-vault door,
> And then they all stood still!
>
> "'Get up, old man! the wake-lights shine!'
> 'Ye murthering witch,' quoth he,
> 'So I 'm rid of your tongue I little care
> If they shine for you or me!'"

I think there is a touch of nature — old Adam's — in the last verse, but if it is too late let it pass. . . . The weather this morning is cold enough for an Esquimaux purgatory — terrible."

Soon after the publication of "Margaret Smith's Journal," in March, 1849, Rev. Theodore Parker wrote the following letter to Mr. Whittier: —

"Your little book of 'Leaves from Margaret Smith's Journal' emboldens me to write and ask you if you would not furnish for the 'Massachusetts Quarterly Review' a paper on the Servants, i. e., the *White Slaves*, which our fathers brought to New England, or otherwise acquired, and held in most wicked bondage. I know how well you have studied the subject of our early history, and suppose that it would not be so laborious for you as for me to do the work. The subject is new; the matter little known, little thought of, yet it is interesting and highly important. If you will be good enough to inform me whether you will do so or not, you will much oblige me. I should not want the paper before the middle of October."

Mr. Whittier was unable to furnish the article called for. But twenty years later, in "Marguerite," and in the preface he prepared for that poem, he has referred to the subject, and also in a letter he wrote in regard to "Evangeline." Before Longfellow considered the matter of writing "Evangeline," Whittier had made a study of the history of the banishment of the Acadians, and had intended to write upon it, but he put it off until he found that Hawthorne was thinking about it, and had suggested it to Longfellow. After the appearance of "Evangeline," Mr. Whittier was glad of his delay, for he said: —

"Longfellow was just the one to write it. If I had attempted it I should have spoiled the artistic effect of the poem by my indignation at the treatment of the exiles by the Colonial Government, who had a very hard lot after coming to this coun-

try. Families were separated and scattered about, only a few of them being permitted to remain in any given locality. The children were bound out to the families in the localities in which they resided, and I wrote a poem upon finding, in the records of Haverhill, the indenture that bound an Acadian girl as a servant in one of the families of that neighborhood. Gathering the story of her death I wrote 'Marguerite.'"

The biographical sketches entitled "Old Portraits" were among Mr. Whittier's contributions to the "National Era," and also some of the papers included in his "Literary Recreations." During his connection with this paper he furnished nearly ninety poems, which, as Mr. Underwood remarks, exceed in number, power, variety, and interest any series, except, perhaps, that contributed to the "Atlantic Monthly." Nathaniel Hawthorne submitted to Whittier his story of "The Great Stone Face;" it was accepted for the "Era," and published January 24, 1850, Hawthorne receiving twenty-five dollars for it. Theodore Parker issued his powerful address "To the People of the United States," in 1848, through the columns of this paper.

As a business venture, "Margaret Smith's Journal" had proved somewhat successful, although the amount realized for it by Mr. Whittier was not large, and Mr. Fields in the summer of 1849 was urging Whittier to get out another volume of prose, to be made up of his contributions to the "National Era." While this was being considered, Whittier wrote to Fields, under date of July 30, 1849: —

"I can't yet make up my mind, but will let thee know in the course of the next ten days, definitely. As for a title, this will nearly express the contents of the volume, 'Old Portraits and Modern Sketches.' . . . I shall send the documents for thy inspection at any rate. I have a mass of material, but it 's like Chaos, without form, and, what is worse, oftentimes *void*."

At about this time, in response to a call from Mr. Fields for a contribution to an annual, Mr. Whittier wrote: —

"In regard to your 'Boston Book' I have nothing available on hand for it, either in prose or rhyme. But some years ago I wrote a story for the 'N. E. Magazine,' called 'The Opium Eater.' I have almost forgotten about it, and I dare say everybody else has *entirely;* which might be made use of as good as new. It is wholly unlike anything else of my writing, as near as I can recollect."

Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth began her career as a novelist with several stories written for the "Era." Mr. Whittier met her while in Washington, in 1847, and read some of her first manuscripts. "Grace Greenwood" was a frequent contributor of both prose and verse, and she began a friendly correspondence with Mr. Whittier which lasted to the end of his life. While writing for the "Era," her name appeared on the covers of a popular Philadelphia magazine as one of its editors. But as in her letters to the organ of the Liberty party she was quite outspoken on the subject of slavery, the proprietor of the magazine

began to hear complaints from the South that he was employing an abolitionist, and his publication could not be received as long as Grace Greenwood was on the editorial staff, or even an occasional contributor. Acting upon his first impulse he dropped her name from the cover, with some parade of subserviency, but he found this lost him subscribers at the North, and, without consulting her, he restored it. She refused to continue in his employment. At about the same time he had the misfortune to publish his own full-length portrait as a frontispiece to the magazine. This was the origin of the stinging poem of Whittier's, "Lines on a Portrait of a Celebrated Publisher:" —

> "A greedy Northern bottle-fly
> Preserved in Slavery's amber!"

The original title of the poem [1] was "Lines on the portrait of a celebrated publisher who has lately saved the Union, and lost a contributor."

Mr. Whittier was always quick to resent an insult to a cause that was near his heart, or an injury to a friend, but he was kind and appreciative in his editorial reviews of the works not only of his literary friends but of strangers. Helpful paragraphs about the young writers of his time are scattered through the columns of all the papers he edited or with which he corresponded. If he had occasion to criticise, it was done in such a way as

[1] In a letter to J. T. Fields, written October 26, 1850, Whittier encloses this poem with the remark: "I send thee Godey, done after my fashion. It was written before I heard of Calhoun's illness, or I should have substituted the name of Foote." Calhoun was not mentioned by name in the poem, but referred to as "Carolina's sage."

to leave no rankling wound. His friends, Holmes, Longfellow, and Lowell, each published volumes of poems in 1849, and of each he wrote elaborate reviews. That of Holmes comes under the head of "Mirth and Medicine." In his review of Lowell he selects "The Present Crisis" as the noblest poem in the collection. He speaks of Longfellow as "one of the sweetest poets of our time," and has especial praise for "The Fire of Driftwood" and "Resignation."

The poem "Our State," published in the "Era" in 1849, was originally entitled "Dedication of a Schoolhouse," and was written for the dedicatory services of the high school building in Newbury, Mass. An address was delivered on that occasion by Rev. Dr. Leonard Withington, and Whittier's hymn was sung by the assembly. The first two lines as originally published were: —

> "The South-land hath its fields of cane,
> The prairie boasts its heavy grain."

This was afterwards changed to: —

> "The South-land boasts its teeming cane,
> The prairied West its heavy grain."

CHAPTER VIII.

POETRY AND POLITICS.

1850–1856.

No comprehensive edition of Whittier's poems had been published before 1849, when B. B. Mussey & Co. of Boston gave them to the public in a dignified octavo volume, which by its style was a recognition of the position attained by the poet. Mr. Mussey was in full sympathy with the poet in his anti-slavery views, and was determined, whether or not he made money out of his venture, to give the poems a setting in accordance with what he considered their intrinsic value. He surprised Mr. Whittier by offering him five hundred dollars for his copyrights, and also a percentage on his sales. With the single exception of "Lays of My Home," published by W. D. Ticknor in 1843, no book of Whittier's had up to this time paid him any royalty worth mentioning. Mussey's stout octavo volume, beautifully printed in large type on heavy paper, neatly bound, and exquisitely illustrated with steel engravings, from designs by Hammatt Billings, met with an unexpectedly large sale, and Mr. Mussey earned the gratitude of Mr. Whittier by paying him more than he had agreed. A second and a third edition were called

for. In the mean time Mr. Whittier had been arranging with Mr. Fields for the publication of "Songs of Labor," which appeared in the early summer of 1850. While correspondence was going on between the poet and his publisher, Mr. Fields was married. Mr. Whittier wrote his congratulations in a postscript to a letter: —

"And now, business over, let me in all sincerity, bachelor as I am, congratulate thee on thy escape from single misery. It is the very wisest thing thee ever did. Were I autocrat I would see to it that every young man over twenty-five, and every young woman over twenty, was married without delay. Perhaps, on second thought, it might be well to keep one old maid and one old bachelor in each town, by way of warning, just as the Spartans did their drunken Helots."

On the 6th of May he returned a proof-sheet of "The Drovers," and some idea of Fields' criticism may be gleaned from the characteristic remarks of Whittier. As originally published in the "Era," in 1847, the first lines of this stanza stood as follows: —

> "From many a Northern lake and hill
> To Ocean's far-off water
> Shall Fancy play the Drover still,
> And make the long night shorter."

Mr. Whittier wrote: "I send thee the proof sadly disfigured, for which thank thyself. I have altered some of the rhymes; others I have left to their fate. Heaven help them, I cannot. In the verse commencing

> "'By many a Northern lake and hill,'

I don't think I have mended the matter. 'Pasture,' 'faster,' 'water,' 'shorter' — both are good Yankee rhymes, but out of New England they would be cashiered. Take thy choice, I see no difference. I have tried other 'Songs of Labor,' but I cannot get the spirit of the early ones, and I think it best to let them go by themselves. I have exhausted that vein, so far as I am concerned. . . . Kearsarge is pronounced always Ke'-ar-sarge. . . . I send 'Memories' out of respect to thy opinion and that of our friend Whipple. Is it best to print it? I humbly thank thee for thy suggestions; let me have more of them." Mr. Fields evidently preferred "pasture" and "faster" as rhymes to "water" and "shorter," and the poem has ever since had this reading: —

> "By many a Northern lake and hill,
> From many a mountain pasture,
> Shall Fancy play the Drover still,
> And speed the long night faster."

Beside the six songs of labor, there were twenty-one miscellaneous poems in this volume, including "The Lakeside," "The Hill-Top," "An Eagle's Quill," "Memories," "Legend of St. Mark," "Ichabod," "To A. K.," etc.

In a note to Fields sent with some proof-sheets of the "Songs of Labor," Whittier stands out for some rhymes which had been criticised by his publisher, but adds: "However, as they say in the East, Who is my mother's son that I should presume to dictate to thy superior wisdom? Do as seemeth best in thine own eyes, and I shall take

it for granted it *is* best. I have had no leisure when in tolerable health for any polishing of my rhymes. I suppose under such circumstances I ought not to have made any, but *I could not help it.*"

In another note he follows a suggestion to substitute "farmer girls" for "corn-fed girls" in "The Huskers," although himself preferring the latter phrase, and justifying it by referring to Allan Ramsay's "kail-fed lassies." The stanza in the Dedication of the "Songs of Labor" beginning, "The doom which to the guilty pair," was an afterthought, sent with the proof-sheet, accompanied by a note containing this sentence: "Pray get out the book as soon as possible, for your own sake; I have a terrible propensity, always after it is too late, to see something which I ought to have seen before."

When Whittier was preparing the copy for the volume "Old Portraits and Modern Sketches," published in 1850, he placed the articles he proposed to use in a portfolio, upon a fly-leaf of which we find in pencil these lines, which were apparently intended for a preface or inscription to the work: —

> "For whatever here is wrong I crave
> Forgiveness; and if haply there be found
> Sweet flower or healing herb where weeds abound,
> How shall I dare to claim
> As mine the gifts the Heavenly Father gave,
> Or without guilty shame
> From His own blessings frame
> A pagan temple for the idol Fame?"

One of the poems included in the volume has an interest as a sort of confession of faith: for once,

when asked by what poem he would wish to be most remembered, he waited a moment, and then thoughtfully and seriously answered, "I think 'The Reformer' embodies my sentiments."

In 1850, Mr. Whittier was active in bringing about the coalition between the Free-Soilers and the Democrats, which resulted in the election of George S. Boutwell as governor of Massachusetts, with the understanding that the Free-Soilers should name the United States Senator and some of the state officials. Mr. Whittier insisted that Sumner should be named as the Free-Soil candidate for Senator, to fill the place made vacant by the resignation of Daniel Webster, who entered the cabinet of President Fillmore. Whittier went to Phillips Beach, Swampscott, to consult Sumner about the matter, and to induce him to accept the nomination for the senatorship, in case the coalition of Free-Soilers and Democrats carried the State. Sumner was unwilling, but listened to his arguments, and at length consented. It was to this visit that the poet referred in his poem "To Charles Sumner:"

> "Thou knowest my heart, dear friend, and well canst guess
> That, even though silent, I have not the less
> Rejoiced to see thy actual life agree
> With the large future which I shaped for thee,
> When, years ago, beside the summer sea,
> White in the moon, we saw the long waves fall
> Baffled and broken from the rocky wall,
> That, to the menace of the brawling flood,
> Opposed alone its massive quietude,
> Calm as a fate; with not a leaf nor vine
> Nor birch-spray trembling in the still moonshine,
> Crowning it like God's peace."

After the governor and his council had been

elected in conformity with the terms of the coalition, some of the Democrats refused to vote for Sumner, and the result was a prolonged contest. The Whigs voted for Robert C. Winthrop, and the Democrats whose consciences would not allow them to vote for a Free-Soiler scattered their votes. Caleb Cushing led the anti-Sumner Democrats. Governor Boutwell's inaugural address gave offense to his Free-Soil allies. When Mr. Whittier saw that the Democrats were not disposed to do as they had agreed, he wrote this letter to Sumner in the first heat of his indignation : —

"Illness, severe and protracted, confines me at home, or I should have seen thee. I have read the message of Governor B.; it is, under the circumstances, insulting and monstrous. May God forgive us for permitting his election. I have watched the balloting with intense anxiety. I see now no hope of our success. I think it is determined by both branches of the Democracy to defeat our purposes. Under these circumstances, dear Sumner, I, who urged the nomination so strongly and imperatively, must now confess I see no other course for thee than to *decline at once*. And Wilson, Knapp, Walker, and the three councilors should at once resign their places. Think of a Free-Soiler in Governor B.'s council! As the election of one of our own men is hopeless, if I were in the legislature I would vote Governor G. N. Briggs right into the United States Senate, as an anti-Webster, anti-Fugitive Slave Law candidate. We have done him an injustice ; and he is at heart right on the great questions in which we

feel an interest. I write, as thou wilt see, in haste, and with the roused feeling incidental upon the perusal of that detestable message, and the vote in the House. I wish thee to consult at once with our friends, Sewall, Adams, S. G. Howe, and others, and with Earle and others in the legislature. Thus far thy position has been manly and honorable. There is now, as it seems to me, a new state of things, requiring a new course of action. Pardon the abruptness of this note; it is the result of *feeling* rather than deliberate reflection."

Sumner's own wish was in accordance with Whittier's suggestion, but in the councils of the party it was decided he should continue his candidacy. The popular feeling against the Fugitive Slave Law was increasing in intensity, and began to have its effect upon the legislature. Towards the last of March, Sumner wished to consult with Whittier, and urged him to come to Boston. If he had been in good health he would have been at work on the floor of the House during the whole contest. But he was compelled to write the following letter: —

"Thy letter, most welcome, was received yesterday, and would have been answered in person had I been able to leave here. I can only assure thee that were I able to visit Boston just now I should need no other inducement than thy request. I have watched with deep interest the proceedings in our legislature, and have, I think, fully comprehended thy feelings, and sympathized with thee in the peculiar and difficult position in which thou hast been placed. As matters now stand, I can-

not venture to offer advice. I fear there would be no prospect of electing any true man if thou shouldst withdraw, as it would somewhat remove obligation from the Democrats to vote with us. On the other hand, I should be sorry to have the election thrown upon the next legislature, as the Whigs will be sure of a majority in that body. We could not again unite with the Democrats, if this legislature adjourns without thy election. We could not trust them; it would be folly to think of it. But I am talking at arm's length and without data. Need I tell thee that I should be right glad to see thee at Amesbury. Why not come and spend First day with us? Thou canst go back by the seven o'clock train on Second day (Monday) morning. I shall expect thee. Do not disappoint me."

Sumner went to Amesbury and consulted with his friend and adviser. At last, on the 24th day of April, upon the twenty-sixth ballot, Sumner by a majority of one was elected United States Senator, a position he held continuously until his death. Here is Whittier's letter of congratulation: —

"I take earliest moment of ability, after a sudden and severe attack of illness, to congratulate thee, not so much on thy election, as upon the proof which it offers of the turning of the tide — the recoil of the popular feeling — the near and certain doom of the wicked Slave Law. My heart is full of gratitude to God. For when I consider the circumstances of this election, I am constrained to regard it as His work. And I re-

joice that thy position is so distinct and emphatic; that thy triumph is such a direct rebuke to politicians, hoary with years of political chicanery and fraud; that unpledged, free, and without a single concession or compromise, thou art enabled to take thy place in the United States Senate. May the good Providence which has overruled the purposes of thy life, in this matter, give thee strength and grace to do great things for humanity. I never knew such a general feeling of real heart-pleasure and satisfaction as is manifested by all except inveterate Hunkers, in view of thy election. The whole country is electrified by it. Sick abed, I heard the guns — Quaker as I am — with real satisfaction."

A letter written on the 18th of May, 1851, to his friend Grace Greenwood, has so full an expression of his feeling in regard to the election of Sumner, that it is here inserted: —

"I am slowly recovering from the severest illness I have known for years, the issue of which, at one time, was to me exceedingly doubtful. Indeed, I scarcely know now how to report myself, but I am better, and full of gratitude to God that I am permitted once more to go abroad and enjoy this beautiful springtime. The weather now is delightfully warm and bright, and the soft green of the meadows is climbing our hills. It is luxury to live. One feels at such times terribly rooted to this world: old Mother Earth seems sufficient for us. . . . After a long trial and much anxiety, our grand object in Massachusetts has been attained. We have sent Charles Sumner into the United

States Senate, — a man physically and spiritually head and shoulders above the old hackneyed politicians of that body. The plan for this was worked out last summer at Phillips Beach, and I sounded Sumner upon it the evening we left you at that place. He really did not want the office, but we forced it upon him. I am proud of old Massachusetts, and thankful that I have had an humble share in securing her so true and worthy a representative of her honor, her freedom, and intellect, as Charles Sumner. He is a noble and gifted man, earnest and truthful. I hope great things of him, and I do not fear for his integrity and fidelity, under any trial. That Sims case was particularly mean on the part of the Boston shopkeepers. I never felt so indignant as when I saw the court-house in chains."

The "soberer piece" referred to in the following letter was "Moloch in State Street," which was published in the "National Era" of May 22, 1851. The rendition of the fugitive slave, Thomas Sims, by United States officials, aided by the armed police of Boston, and abetted by State Street merchants, at night, by stealth, while the state officials who would have prevented it slept, occurred a few days before the election of Sumner, and caused an outburst of popular feeling which probably hastened the election. The "bit of doggerel," referred to below, has never appeared in any edition of Whittier's works; it served its turn as a bit of poetical fireworks, for an evening's amusement. Many such "occasional" poems were written by him, with no expectation that they would be printed. He wrote to Sumner: —

"The bit of doggerel[1] on the other page might answer to raise a laugh at our friend Gilbert Gore's party to-morrow evening, which I expect I cannot enjoy in person. Give it, if there is nothing objectionable in it, to friend Burlingame, or some one who will be at the party, as the anonymous contribution of a friend who could not be present. My soberer piece was sent to the 'Era' a fortnight ago, but when it will appear, if at all, is uncertain. I quite approve of thy decision in respect to public speaking to any great extent. Thy letter of acceptance gives great satisfaction to all except the inveterate Hunkers. I feel exceedingly anxious for Palfrey's success, and I do not think it would be any way improper for

[1] WHAT STATE STREET SAID TO SOUTH CAROLINA, AND WHAT SOUTH CAROLINA SAID TO STATE STREET.

Muttering "fine upland staple," "prime Sea Island finer,"
With cotton bales pictured on either retina,
"Your pardon!" said State Street to South Carolina;
"We feel and acknowledge your laws are diviner
Than any promulgated by the thunders of Sinai!
Sorely pricked in the sensitive conscience of business
We own and repent of our sins of remissness:
Our honor we 've yielded, our words we have swallowed;
And quenching the lights which our forefathers followed,
And turning from graves by their memories hallowed,
With teeth on ball-cartridge, and finger on trigger,
Reversed Boston Notions, and sent back a nigger!"

"Get away!" cried the Chivalry, busy a-drumming,
And fifing and drilling, and such Quattle-bumming;
"With your April-fool slave hunt! Just wait till December
Shall see your new Senator stalk through the Chamber,
And Puritan heresy prove neither dumb nor
Blind in that pestilent Anakim, Sumner!"

thee to speak once or twice in his district.[1] Your relation and personal friendship alone would justify it — say in Cambridge, or some other large town. Think of it, and act. Rantoul will unquestionably be chosen."

It is seldom that the world has seen such an example of the poetic and devotional temperament, combined with preëminent political sagacity and business judgment, as in the case of Whittier. He was a safe counselor for every emergency. The anti-slavery movement needed just such a balance wheel as he proved to be. He could work without quarreling with any one who was earnestly seeking to benefit the race. When he came to the parting of the roads, and could not walk with one with whom he had been in general agreement, he took his own way quietly, bidding his companion God speed. In every church and in every political party he found men he loved, and he did not insist upon their agreement with his opinions on any subject as a condition of friendship. He looked for the best points in the characters of all with whom he came in contact, and without being blind to their failings made the most of their fairest side. Positive in his own convictions, he had the widest charity for every honest difference of opinion he encountered. But he had no patience with insincerity and heartlessness in any form. With all the indignation of the Hebrew prophets, as one has well said of him, he never lost sight of that love of God and love of man, which tempers even the hatred of evil.

[1] Sumner did not speak for Palfrey, but he wrote a letter of earnest support, in which he added a good word for Rantoul.

Many of Whittier's notes to Fields contain reference to current events and to the new books of other authors, as in the following, — written April 7, 1851: "So your Union tinkers have really caught a 'nigger' at last! A very pretty and refreshing sight it must have been to Sabbath-going Christians, yesterday, — that chained court-house of yours. And Bunker Hill monument looking down upon all. But the matter is too sad for irony. God forgive the miserable politicians who gamble for office with dice loaded with human hearts! Thoreau's 'Walden' is capital reading, but very wicked and heathenish. The practical moral of it seems to be that if a man is willing to sink himself into a woodchuck he can live as cheaply as that quadruped; but after all, for me, I prefer walking on two legs."

Whenever friends of Mr. Whittier were traveling in this country or any other, he followed them in their journeys with the keenest interest, and greatly enjoyed such letters from them as described the scenes through which they were passing. Every book of travel that came in his way was thoroughly read, and his memory held accurate pictures of scenery and people, a fact that must impress every reader of his poetry. The local coloring of those poems which relate to countries he never saw is as faithful to the reality as if he had not been compelled to rely upon the eyes of others. We have elsewhere seen how his friendship for Bayard Taylor began. It was not alone the poet soul he recognized, but he enjoyed the charming stories of his travels, and as he read

"The Norseman's Ride" his imagination was led into regions that had great attractions for him. A half page of the "Era" is filled with a lively review of Taylor's "Eldorado," dealing especially with the chapters concerning the new State of California, and concluding with this suggestion: "In taking leave of his volumes, we cannot forbear venturing a suggestion to the author, that he may find a field of travel, less known and quite as interesting at the present time, in the vast Territory of New Mexico — the valley of the Del Norte, with its old Castilian and Aztec monuments and associations; the Great Salt Lake, and the unexplored regions of the great valley of the Colorado, between the mountain ranges of the Sierra Madre and the Sierra Nevada. We know of no one better fitted for such an enterprise, or for whom, judging from the spirit of his California narrative, it would present more attractions." Mr. Taylor's pleasure at this kind reception of his work is expressed in the following letter from New York, bearing date July 9, 1850: —

"I owe you a world of thanks for your surpassing notice of 'Eldorado' in the 'National Era.' I have read it with the most genuine pleasure, not on account of the life it will give to my literary reputation, but because you seem to have so thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed my work. I care but little for the general praise or censure, but I *do* value that of my friends, and if I satisfy them, there is no higher reward. Would you had been with me in California! I often recalled, while there, those lines from 'The Crisis' describ-

ing the scenery of our central wilderness. The next trip you propose for me is the very one which I have often wished to make, and if it was not time that I should stop from roving, and build up a home for myself, I would go there next year. I am going to Boston next week, for a few days, and hope to be able to pay another flying visit to Amesbury. I have not forgotten the view I had from the hill-top."

The visit suggested in this note was in a few days made in company with James Russell Lowell, as we find in a letter Taylor wrote to a friend, dated July 22, 1850: —

"Friday morning early, Lowell and I started for Amesbury, which we reached in a terrible north-easter. What a capital time we had with Whittier, in his nook of a study, with the rain pouring on the roof, and the wind howling at the door!"

These visits of Taylor to Amesbury are referred to in a stanza of "The Last Walk in Autumn:"

> "Here, too, of answering love secure,
> Have I not welcomed to my hearth
> The gentle pilgrim troubadour,
> Whose songs have girdled half the earth;
> Whose pages, like the magic mat
> Whereon the Eastern lover sat,
> Have borne me over Rhineland's purple vines,
> And Nubia's tawny sands, and Phrygia's mountain pines."

A meeting to express sympathy for Hungary was held in Boston, August 20, 1851, and Sumner was expected to make a speech. On that day, Whittier wrote to him: —

"I wish I felt able to take the cars to Boston and hear thy speech this evening. I was glad to

hear of thy meeting, although I greatly fear it is too late to be of any service to poor Hungary. She will be crushed under the avalanche of Russian barbarism, and the sympathies and congratulations of the friends of freedom abroad will be to her 'like delicates poured upon a mouth shut up, or as meats set upon a grave.' I wish, either in resolutions or speeches, the disgraceful conduct of the United States Consul at Paris [1] could be noticed as it deserves. Through him our government commits itself in favor of the kings and priests of Europe in their barbarous measures suppressing the growth of free principles. We are made parties to the usurpations of Bonaparte the Less, the bombardment of Rome, the bloody rule of Naples, the atrocities of Austria and Russia in Hungary. The miserable fellow would be nothing by himself, but as an official of our government he can do a great deal to disgrace us. . . . The New York conference ended as I expected, after the late elections. The South always contrives to control the North, by throwing itself on the Whig or Democratic side, just as these parties are inclined towards abolition. For instance, in 1839 the Whigs talked anti-slavery at the North. The slaveholders deserted their faithful allies, and went over to the abolition Whig, and the Whigs, as in duty bound, eschewed abolition. In 1843–44, they set aside Van Buren, and got a placeholder nominated by the Democrats, who was for Texas annexation with slavery, and voted him into

[1] Robert Walsh, who was also correspondent of several American journals.

power. He did his work, and the Whigs in their exasperation again threatened to become abolitionists; and the South silenced them by voting for General Taylor. Now, the Democrats are forming coalitions with the abolitionists, and the South must change in their favor. This is the way that the two parties at the North are managed. I have been desirous to see thee and others of our Free-Soil friends, but have been confined at home by illness."

In the fall of 1851, Sumner desired a continuance of the alliance with the Democrats, but many men of the Free-Soil party were opposed to it. He wrote to Whittier on the 7th of October: "Will not Higginson see the matter in a practical light? I respect him so much, and honor his principles so supremely, that I am pained to differ from him; but I do feel that we must not neglect the opportunity afforded by alliance — not fusion — with the Democrats to prevent the Whigs from establishing themselves in the State. Palfrey is now earnestly of this inclining; so is Hopkins; also Burlingame,— and all these stood out before."

In December, 1851, Kossuth arrived in this country, and from his anxiety to propitiate all classes of our people in favor of his cause, in his first speech, in New York, he took pains to say that he did not propose to interfere with our domestic institutions. Whittier wrote Sumner the letter that follows, which is without date, but its contents show that it was written early in December, 1851: —

"On thy way to Washington pray see W. C.

Bryant, Seward, and some other leading men, — Greeley, for instance — and caution them to see to it that the 'Union savers' do not thrust their notions upon Kossuth, and call out from him speeches of the Castle Garden stamp. Naturally he would deprecate a dissolution of this Union — but he ought to understand that it is not in the slightest jeopardy — that the solicitude of the 'Union savers' is all for political effect. I wish he could have a half hour's talk with Benton. I do not wish him to be mixed up in *any way* with our domestic matters. He has his mission; we ours. I hope thou wilt see the great Hungarian's reception in New York, and take part in it. I have just finished reading his English speeches, and I am deeply impressed by his wisdom and ability. God bless thee, my friend, in thy new and difficult, but glorious position."

Sumner was nine months in the Senate before he found an opportunity to make a speech on the great issue upon which he was elected. There was a conspiracy among the Senators of both parties to prevent any chance being offered him. Whittier refers to this in the following letter: —

"I am by no means surprised at the refusal of the Senate to hear thee. It is simply carrying out the resolutions of the two Baltimore conventions. Never mind. The right time will come for thee, if not this session, the next certainly. I think our proper place for speaking now is to the people directly, rather than to Congress. I want thee to put on thy harness this fall and do battle as in '48. . . . The sad intelligence of the death of Robert

Rantoul[1] has just reached me. I have lost an old and valued friend, and the State and country a noble man. How little did I expect to outlive him. I have just read thy tribute to him. It is a relief to me to hear the right words spoken of my friend."

Mr. Sumner's reply to this letter was written in the Senate Chamber, August 13, 1852: —

"I am grateful for your words of cheer and confidence. I have never desired to come here, as you well know. Since I have been here, our cause has never been out of my mind. In the exercise of my best discretion I have postponed speaking until now. To this course I was advised by friends also. Should I not succeed before the close of the session, I shall feel sad; but I cannot feel that I have failed in a duty. *But I shall speak* on an amendment of the Civil Appropriation Bill. Thus far, whenever I have spoken I have been listened to. On this occasion I may not have the attention; but the speech shall be made. For a long time I have been prepared to handle the Fugitive Slave Bill at length. By the blessing of God it shall be done. . . . With you I deplore Rantoul. I pray you read my remarks *as corrected* in the 'National Era.' . . . I cannot make any lyceum engagements for the coming season, and I shrink from the political labors to which you beckon me. I have been in my seat every day this session. I long for repose and an opportunity for quiet labors. But more than all things I long to declare

[1] Robert Rantoul died at Washington, August 7, 1852, while representing the Essex district in Congress.

myself here against the Fugitive Slave Bill. Then I shall be happy for a while. At this moment I can say nothing. My ship is in a *terrible calm*, like that of the Ancient Mariner. But it will move yet. . . . I notice the withdrawal of confidence from me. Well-a-day! I never courted it. I will be content without it. But I shall claim yours."

TO RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

AMESBURY, 21st 10th mo., 1853.

What marvelous weather! Amidst the autumnal opulence of the last two weeks, I have lived more than royally. How poor and mean in comparison seem all the pomps and shows of kings and priests! And what folly to run abroad over the Old World, when all that is beautiful may be seen from our own door-stone! Munich, the Louvre, and the Vatican are doubtless well worth seeing, but I fancy I see all and much more in my own painted woodlands. At any rate, I am satisfied. Oh, that I could put into words the hymn of gratitude and unspeakable love which at such a season as this is sung in my heart. I wish thee could have been with us the other day on the Merrimac. We wanted an interpreter of the mystery of the glory about us.

When Taylor returned from Africa, Japan, and China, in 1853, he received from his Amesbury friend this greeting: —

"Give me thy hand! Welcome home again, and a happy New Year to thee! We are fellow travelers. I have followed thee all the way over the

world, without any share of thy expenses, trouble, or fatigue. I wish, though, we could have reached the snowy African mountains. *Thou* wast there, in spirit, however, beyond doubt, as thy splendid poem testifies. But to the point: Canst thou not steal away a day or two, — see Whipple, Samuel Longfellow, and Fields, — run up and spend the night with me, and talk an hour or so to our lyceum on what thee saw in Africa and Japan? Don't refuse — there is no need of a formal lecture — our folks only want to see thee and hear thee talk a little. Don't rank this with a thousand and one other applications — but drop me a line and say *yes*. Say a good word for Phœbe Cary's poem, and Mrs. Howe's memorable 'Passion Flowers,' just out from Ticknor's."

The Amesbury Lyceum secured many a first-rate lecturer it could not otherwise have obtained, by such an application as this from Whittier. As for himself, he never attended an evening lecture, even when Beecher and Phillips went from his tea-table to the platform. The great orators would come to this little village to meet their friend and enjoy his hospitality.

"For Righteousness' Sake," originally entitled "Lines inscribed to Friends under Arrest for Treason against the Slave Power," was written in the winter of 1854–55, when Theodore Parker, with others, was indicted in the United States Circuit Court in Boston, for resisting the process for the rendition of the fugitive slave, Anthony Burns, the alleged act of resistance in Parker's case being a speech he had delivered in Faneuil Hall.

The poem now known as "The Rendition," originally published in the "Era" in 1854, was then entitled "Ichabod," the same title given four years earlier to the famous philippic upon Webster. Many of the titles of Whittier's poems were thus duplicated, and even triplicated, as in the case of "Stanzas for the Times." The name Ichabod seemed to have a fascination for him. Several of his early poems, published while in the Academy, had it for signature.

"Maud Muller" was first published in the "National Era" in 1854. Whittier sent this note to the printer, with his manuscript: "The term 'chimney lug' which occurs in this poem refers to the old custom in New England of hanging a pole with hooks attached to it down the chimney, to hang pots and kettles on. It is called a 'lug-pole.' I mention this for fear the word would not be understood, and taken by the printers for something else."

To a correspondent who asked of him the pronunciation of "Muller;" about the word "but" in the nineteenth couplet of the poem; and the meaning of one of the last couplets, Mr. Whittier replied: "I don't think 'Maud Muller' worth serious analysis, but in answer to thy questions I would say: 1. Pronounce the name with either the Yankee or the German accent — it matters not which. [He always pronounced the *u* as in gull.] 2. 'But' should have been 'And.' 'For all of us a sweet hope lies' is the prose version."

The following passage occurs in a letter written to Fields in 1854: "I met Holmes for the first

time at Haverhill the other night. There is rare humor in him, and I like him. I inclose thee a jingle of mine — not published — and therefore only for thy private reading. It is one of those pieces that make themselves, and come to you uncalled for. My 'Singletary Papers' still drag their slow length along." The "jingle" was "Official Piety."

In 1854, Messrs. Ticknor & Fields published a collection of Mr. Whittier's prose essays under the title of "Literary Recreations," most of the articles in which were copied from his contributions to the "National Era."

Mr. Sumner was at last heard in the Senate upon themes that aroused him to his best oratorical efforts. The speeches made in the summer of 1854, upon the Kansas and Nebraska questions, are referred to by Mr. Whittier in the letter here given: —

"I will not trouble thee with a long letter: but I cannot forbear to thank thee, in the name of humanity, and our dear old Commonwealth, for thy late noble efforts. I have never seen such an effect produced by any speech in Congress before. Everybody has read the newspaper reports of the encounter, and everybody, save a few desperate office-holders, commends thy course in terms of warm admiration. Thy first speech on the Nebraska crime was everywhere commended. Indeed, all things considered, I think it the best speech of the session. It was the fitting word — it entirely satisfied me, and with a glow of heart I thank God that its author was my friend. . . . What a pity

—— could not see the path clear before him to stand forward at this crisis, and bring his party up to the desired point! It has occurred to me that a letter from thee — kind, generous, and earnest — might move him. However, I only throw out the hint; there may be good reasons against it. Just now, the people of Massachusetts will hear and indeed approve of almost anything against the Fugitive Slave Law. One more Burns case would make Hunkerism an unsafe commodity in any part of the State."

TO LUCY LARCOM.

1855.

Elizabeth has been reading Browning's poem ("Men and Women"), and she tells me it is great. I have only dipped into it, here and there, but it is not exactly comfortable reading. It seemed to me like a galvanic battery in full play — its spasmodic utterances and intense passion make me feel as if I had been taking a bath among electric eels. But I have not read enough to criticise.

The repeal of the Missouri Compromise added to the irritation at the North caused by frequent slave hunts in communities that had no patience with them. The determination to colonize Kansas with men who would make it a free State grew out of this repeal, and it was Whittier again who spoke for the North, with a voice heard farther at the time than the speech of any orator, and which will not be silent while our language endures. In a brilliant magazine article,[1] Hon. James J.

[1] In *Harper's Monthly*, April, 1893.

Ingalls has given a spirited account of the efforts made to colonize Kansas with free labor, so as to secure by popular vote the exclusion of slavery hitherto effected by the Missouri Compromise. After referring to the appeals of the Northern press, he adds: —

"The journalists were reinforced by the poets, artists, novelists, and orators of an age distinguished for genius, learning, and inspiration. Lincoln, Douglas, Seward, and Sumner delivered their most memorable speeches upon the theme. Phillips and Beecher, then at the meridian of their powers, appealed to the passions and the conscience of the nation by unrivaled eloquence and invective. Prizes were offered for lyrics, that were obtained, so profound was the impulse, by obscure and unknown competitors. Lowell, Bryant, Holmes, Longfellow, and Emerson lent the magic of their verse. Whittier was the laureate of the era. His 'Burial of Barbour' and 'Marais du Cygne' seemed like a prophet's cry for vengeance to the immigrants, who marched to the inspiring strains of 'Suoni la Tromba,' or chanted to the measure of 'Auld Lang Syne,'

> "'We crossed the prairies, as of old
> Our fathers crossed the sea.'

The contagion spread to foreign lands, and alien torches were lighted at the flame. Walter Savage Landor wrote an ode to free Kansas. Lady Byron collected money which she sent to the author of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' for the relief of the sufferers in Kansas. Volunteers from Italy, France, and Germany, revolutionists and exiles, served in

the desultory war, many of whom afterwards fought with distinction in the armies of the Union. It was the romance of history. The indescribable agitation which always attends the introduction of a great moral question into politics pervaded the souls of men, transforming the commonplace into ideal, and inaugurating a heroic epoch. The raptures that swelled the hearts of the pioneers yet thrill and vibrate in the blood of their posterity, like the chords of a smitten harp when the player has departed."

When bands of ruffians from Missouri crossed the border and committed atrocious barbarities upon these anti-slavery pioneers, a mighty wave of indignation stirred the whole North, and Whittier gave voice to it in his poem "Le Marais du Cygne." Some of the details of the massacre of Swan's Marsh will explain to younger readers who have no memory of these stirring times the reason of the deep feeling displayed in this poem. "Chouteau's Trading Post," as it was called at the time of the massacre, is on the old military road, now disused, from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Scott, on the south bank of the Marais du Cygne River, three miles from the Missouri line. On the morning of May 19, the settlers at the Post were engaged in their usual pursuits, unarmed, and without thought of danger. A band of twenty-five or thirty Missourians, mounted, and under command of Captain Charles A. Hamilton, crossed the border, and captured twelve men, several of them the heads of families. They were bound and taken to a ravine, where they were placed in line,

and fired upon at close range. Five were killed, and all the others wounded, except one. He fell with the others, feigned death, and escaped injury. All the wounded recovered, and some of them became influential citizens in the free State they had helped to found. Whittier's verses were written while the soil was yet red with the blood of the victims. The last stanza proved prophetical: —

"On the lintels of Kansas
That blood shall not dry;
Henceforth the Bad Angel
Shall harmless go by;
Henceforth to the sunset,
Unchecked on her way,
Shall Liberty follow
The march of the day."

The assassins were well-known Missourians, not disguised. Only one was arrested that year, and he escaped. But in 1863, while the civil war was in progress, another of the murderers was captured and hanged. One of the wounded men acted as his executioner.

As Whittier watched the progress of the cause of liberty, and recognized the surety of its triumph, he became less impatient of the wrongs which were so surely to be overruled for good, and returned less frequently to the theme that in former days aroused his righteous wrath, and nerved him to the utterance of his passionate "Voices of Freedom."

In July, 1854, he was invited by Ralph Waldo Emerson and others to join them at a meeting in Boston, called to consider the political situation, and to devise a way to bring together the men of all parties who were opposed to the encroachments

of slavery. His reply is dated Amesbury, 3d 7th mo., and is addressed to Mr. Emerson: —

"The circular signed by thyself and others, inviting me to meet you at Boston on the 7th inst., has just reached me. If I am able to visit Boston on that day I shall be glad to comply with the invitation. Your movement I regard as every way timely and expedient. I am quite sure good will come of it, in some way. I have been for some time past engaged in efforts tending to the same object, — the consolidation of the anti-slavery sentiment of the North. For myself, I am more than willing to take the humblest place in a new organization made up from Whigs, anti-Nebraska Democrats, and Free-Soilers. I care nothing for names; I have no prejudices against Whig or Democrat; show me a party cutting itself loose from slavery, repudiating its treacherous professed allies of the South, and making the *protection of Man* the paramount object, and I am ready to go with it, heart and soul. The great body of the people of all parties here are ready to unite in the formation of a new party. The Whigs especially only wait for the movement of the men to whom they have been accustomed to look for direction. I may be mistaken, but I fully believe that Robert C. Winthrop holds in his hands the destiny of the North. By throwing himself on the side of this movement he could carry with him the Whig strength of New England. The Democrats here, with the exception of two or three office-holders and their dependents, defend the course of Banks, and applaud the manly speeches of Sumner."

"The Panorama" was written by Mr. Whittier, to be read at the opening of a course of lectures on slavery, delivered in Tremont Temple, Boston, during the winter of 1855–56. The plan of this course provided that both sides of the question should be given, and leading Southern statesmen were invited to alternate with eminent Northern philanthropists in presenting their views. Among the men not in sympathy with the anti-slavery movement who were asked to speak from this platform were Henry W. Hilliard of Alabama, A. P. Butler of South Carolina, Wm. A. Smith of Virginia, Robert Toombs of Georgia, David R. Atchison of Missouri, and Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois. Dr. Samuel G. Howe was chairman of the lecture committee. William Lloyd Garrison was invited to give one of the lectures, but he declined, not being in sympathy with the management. The first lecture in the course was announced as to be given November 22, 1855, by Horace Mann, to be followed by a poem by John G. Whittier. Mr. Whittier asked Rev. Thomas Starr King to read his poem, and gave him the manuscript of "The Panorama." The following letter by Mr. King, written November 30, 1855, and found among Mr. Whittier's papers, gives some idea of the enthusiastic spirit with which he performed the task assigned him. The reading occupied forty minutes. Charles Sumner was upon the platform, and the reference to his name and "fresh renown" in the poem was greeted with much applause: —

"I have hardly been in Boston since the even-

ing when my voice was honored, as never before, in being the medium of your genius. I beg you therefore to accept this fact as an explanation of the delay in sending you my thanks for the compliment you paid me in asking my poor service as your interpreter. The poem is admirably adapted to lecture utterance. It is so broad in its plan, so vivid, so stirring, so practical in its appeal, that it needs two thousand ears, and the wide atmosphere of the public heart, to allow the proportions of its power to appear, and its eloquence to find sea room to disport itself. I have heard the heartiest encomiums of it, even from men not specially interested in the anti-slavery cause, who were swept by it. Inadequate as the reading was, I am suspicious that the soul of the piece possessed my voice, and lifted it above its natural poverty. If possible, I shall read it in Worcester, some time during the week. Would that Mrs. Webb might give it wings! Though I think it needs a man's throat and passion. I have been invited to read it in Manchester, but could not go. I shall mention this fact to Dr. Stone when I see him. God bless you, my dear friend, and preserve you for many such Tyrtæan songs. I thank you, and remain cordially yours."

The allusion to Mrs. M. E. Webb is due to the fact that she was to read Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's drama the next evening in the course. She was a colored dramatic reader.

"The Panorama" was written with a view to political effect in the presidential campaign of 1856, and Mr. Whittier desired it to be published

at once, as a book. Mr. Fields suggested that it was so late that it could not appear until after the holiday season, and had better be postponed until the next fall. Whittier made reply in a letter dated January 6, 1856. The poem to which he referred as being in manuscript was either "The Barefoot Boy," or "The Ranger," which was originally named "Martha Mason, a Song of the Old French War;" or possibly it might have been "Mary Garvin," which was published in the "National Era" in the month of January, 1856. These three poems were in manuscript at about this time.

"The wisdom of thy suggestion is very manifest. I have only one objection to it. 'The Panorama' is a poem for the present time; it is like Pierce's Message — it won't keep. But if it could be put at once through the press, with the other poems, it would answer my purpose. Now, if you have nothing better to do, just inform me, and you shall have the other pieces at once, as I have them, for a wonder, at hand, including one in MS. which I like better than 'Maud Muller.' But I don't think much of my own judgment in such matters, and it may be a very poor affair in reality."

In compliance with this request the book was put to press at once, and among the poems and ballads with which it was enriched were "A Memory," "Maud Muller," "Mary Garvin," "The Ranger," "Summer by the Lakeside," "Burns," "Tauler," "The Barefoot Boy," and "The Kansas Emigrants." The proof sheets came to Amesbury in the winter, and the poet was not in the mood to make so many changes as usual. He wrote: —

"I should perhaps make some other changes in the poem — but brain and hand are numb with frost. Whatever poetical fancies garnered up in more genial weather may be left within me, they are frozen up before reaching my finger-tips, like the tunes in Munchausen's horn, and I cannot, like the veracious hunter, get up a fire sufficient to thaw them out."

The origin of the poem "A Memory" is given in the following extract from a letter written by Mrs. Mary Rogers Kimball, daughter of Whittier's early and dear friend, N. P. Rogers: —

"We all loved Mr. Whittier, and before we left our home near Plymouth, N. H., for the West, in 1853, I think, he spent a week with us. With what delight we wandered, talked, read, and played with him! We sang to him; and of all the songs, English, Scotch, or Irish, he loved the negro melodies best. How well I remember his creeping softly behind me and shaking into my neck the dew from a branch of cinnamon rose he had picked and carried a long distance that early morning, 'for this express purpose,' as he said. I cherished the precious twig for many years. . . . The little poem entitled 'A Memory' was of my next older sister, Ellen, who was spending a few days with friends at Wolfborough, N. H. She was a singer, and one evening the poet wrapped a white shawl about her, and put a Quaker bonnet on her head, and made her sing through the long twilight the songs he loved. The little event is immortalized; the Singer and the Poet have 'passed on.'"

When "Mary Garvin" was published in the "Era" in 1856, Mr. Whittier received a pleasant letter from his friend Dr. H. I. Bowditch, inclosing one from his young daughter Olivia, then not old enough to write, but who printed a letter in childish fashion. She had taken much pleasure in hearing the poem read by her father, and wished to send her thanks. This is Mr. Whittier's reply to the child's note, dated Amesbury, 28th 1st mo., 1856 : —

My dear Friend Olivia, — I thank thee for thy kind note ; and am sure some good angel bade thee write it. I was very glad to know that my "Mary Garvin" gave thee so much pleasure. I know of no better way of being happy than in making others so. And then too, as an author, I was gratified by thy praise of my verses, because I was sure it was the honest expression of thy feeling. I remember that after Bernardin St. Pierre had written his beautiful story of "Paul and Virginia" (which I hope thou hast not read yet, because in that case there is so much more pleasure in store for thee), he was afraid it was not good enough for publication, and was on the point of laying it aside, when he chanced to read it to a group of children, whose evident delight and tearful sympathy encouraged him to print it, and thus please and sadden the hearts of young and old from that time to this. Following St. Pierre's example, I think I shall print "Mary Garvin" in a book with some other pieces. If my young critics are pleased I can well afford to let the older ones

find fault. I thank thee and thy dear father and mother for the invitation, and hope I shall be able to accept it when spring brings back the green grass, the bright flowers, and these wintry drifts are only a memory.

Mr. Whittier's interest in the movement for woman suffrage is shown in this letter to a Woman's Rights Convention, held in Worcester: —

"Come what may, Nature is inexorable; she will reverse none of her laws at the bidding of male or female conventions; and men and women, with or without the right of suffrage, will continue to be men and women still. In the event of the repeal of certain ungenerous, not to say unmanly, enactments, limiting and abridging the rights and privileges of women, we may safely confide in the adaptive powers of Nature. She will take care of the new fact in her own way, and reconcile it to the old, through the operation of her attractive or repellent forces. Let us, then, not be afraid to listen to the claims and demands of those who, in some sort at least, represent the feelings and interests of those nearest and dearest to us. Let Oliver ask for more. It is scarcely consistent with our assumed superiority to imitate the horror and wide-orbed consternation of Mr. Bumble and his parochial associates, on a similar occasion."

On the 23d day of May, 1856, Sumner was struck down in the Senate chamber, by Preston S. Brooks, of South Carolina, for words uttered in debate. This is the letter Whittier wrote to him when he learned that his injuries were not likely to deprive him of life: —

"I have been longing to write to thee, or rather to see thee (if I had strength I should now be in Washington) for the last fortnight. God knows my heart has been with thee, through thy season of trial and suffering; and now it is full of gratitude and joy that thy life has been spared to us and to Freedom. I have read and reread thy speech, and I look upon it as thy best. A grand and terrible philippic, worthy of the great occasion, — the severe and awful Truth which the sharp agony of the national crisis demanded. It is enough for immortality. So far as thy own reputation is concerned, nothing more is needed. But this is of small importance. We cannot see as yet the entire results of that speech, but everything now indicates that it has *saved the country*. If at the coming election a Free State President is secured it will be solely through the influence of that speech, and the mad fury which its unanswerable logic and fearless exposure of official criminals provoked. Thank God, then, dear Sumner, even in thy sufferings, that He has 'made the wrath of man to praise Him, and that the remainder of wrath He will restrain.' My heart is full and I have much to say; but I will not weary thee with words. Permit me a word of caution. Do not try to go back to thy senatorial duties this session. Avoid, as far as possible, all excitement; get out of Washington as soon as thee is able to travel. I almost dread to have thee come North, the feelings of all classes of our people are so wrought up; they so long to manifest to thee their love and admiration that I fear we should retard

thy recovery by our demonstrations. Thy brother George must take care of thee, and prevent thy being 'killed by kindness'! My mother and sister join me in love to thee. And now, dear Sumner, I can only say, Heaven bless and preserve thee."

The intensity of Mr. Whittier's feeling in regard to the outrage upon Mr. Sumner is shown in the following letter of his, read at a meeting of the citizens of Amesbury and Salisbury, held on the 2d of June, 1856: —

"Fearing I may not be able to attend the meeting this evening, I beg leave to say a word to my fellow-citizens. I need not say how fully I sympathize with the object of the meeting, nor speak of my grief for the sufferings and danger of a beloved friend, now nearer and dearer than ever, stricken down at his post of duty, for his manly defense of freedom; nor of my mingled pity, horror, and indignation in view of the atrocities in Kansas. It seems to me to be no time for the indulgence of mere emotions. Neither railing nor threats befit the occasion. It is our first duty to inquire, why it is that the bad men in power have been emboldened to commit the outrages of which we complain. Why is it that the South has dared to make such experiments upon us? The North is not united for freedom, as the South is for slavery. We are split into factions, we get up paltry side issues, and quarrel with and abuse each other, and the Slave Power, as a matter of course, takes advantage of our folly. That evil power is only strong through our dissensions. It could do no-

thing against a united North. The one indispensable thing for us is Union. Can we not have it? Can we not set an example in this very neighborhood, — Whigs, Democrats, Free-Soilers, and Americans, joining hands in defense of our common liberties? We must forget, *forgive*, and UNITE. I feel a solemn impression that the present opportunity is the last that will be offered us for the peaceful and constitutional remedy of the evil which afflicts us. The crisis in our destiny has come: the hour is striking of our final and irrevocable choice. God grant that it may be rightfully made. Let us not be betrayed into threats. Leave violence where it belongs, with the wrongdoer. It is worse than folly to talk of fighting Slavery, when we have not yet agreed to vote against it. Our business is with poll-boxes, not cartridge-boxes; with ballots, not bullets. The path of duty is plain: God's providence calls us to walk in it. Let me close by repeating, Forget, *forgive*, and UNITE."

In a letter to Emerson dated June 13, 1856, Mr. Whittier urged him to attend the convention that nominated Frémont. He wrote: "I see this morning that Governor Boutwell is not able to attend the Philadelphia convention. I believe thou art one of the substitutes, and I drop this line to urge thee to go in his place. It is a great occasion: the most important public duty which can occur in a lifetime. By all means, go. A thousand thanks for thy speech at the Concord meeting!"

Elizabeth Whittier was in full sympathy with

her brother in his political and anti-slavery work. In a letter to her friend Lucy Larcom, written June 19, 1856, she says: —

"Our poor land! What can we do? I know what *thee* can do — write a ringing song for freedom and Frémont. Frémont is my hero of years; his wild ranger life has had the greatest charm for me. I used to envy Kit Carson, who was always near him, helping bravely in the trials and dangers of his young leader. I wish I was somebody — I would do great things now — write songs, first of all. Will not some one set the present heart-beat of the people to music? Those were dark days for Greenleaf, when his noblest and dearest friend was in great danger. I, too, passed under the shadow. Sumner's position seems very grand and solemn — the charged prophet of freedom. His great work is before him."

This call for a campaign song was responded to by Miss Larcom. It is easy to believe that Elizabeth's enthusiasm was also the inspiration of her brother's political work in the same year. In addition to the deep interest Mr. Whittier took in the contest for Free Soil involved in the Frémont campaign of 1856, was a strong personal feeling for the "Pathfinder," whose way across the continent he had followed with the enthusiasm and sympathy he gave to all explorers. He hardly needed the summons Charles A. Dana, then one of the editors of the "New York Tribune," sent him to write a campaign song for his favorite. Dana wrote, under date of June 8, 1856: "A powerful means of exciting and maintaining the spirit of freedom in the coming decisive contest must be

songs. If we are to conquer, as I trust in God we are, a great deal must be done by that genial and inspiring stimulus. They should be written to popular and stirring tunes, such as the Star-Spangled Banner, God Save the King, the Marseillaise, Tippecanoe and Tyler too, Old Dan Tucker, and the like. In this case we of course appeal to you for help." In response to this call from Mr. Dana, Whittier wrote several lyrics, of which one is here given, written to be sung to the music of "Suoni la Tromba" in "I Puritani:"—

"Sound now the trumpet warningly!
The storm is rolling nearer,
The hour is striking clearer,
In the dusky dome of sky.
If dark and wild the morning be,
A darker morn before us
Shall fling its shadows o'er us
If we let the hour go by.
Sound we then the trumpet chorus!
Sound the onset wild and high!
Country and Liberty!
Freedom and Victory!
These words shall be our cry,—
Frémont and Victory!

"Sound, sound the trumpet fearlessly!
Each arm its vigor lending,
Bravely with wrong contending,
And shouting Freedom's cry!
The Kansas homes stand cheerlessly,
The sky with flame is ruddy,
The prairie turf is bloody,
Where the brave and gentle die.
Sound the trumpet stern and steady!
Sound the trumpet strong and high!
Country and Liberty!
Freedom and Victory!
These words shall be our cry,—
Frémont and Victory!

"Sound now the trumpet cheerily!
Nor dream of Heaven's forsaking
The issue of its making,
That Right with Wrong must try.
The cloud that hung so drearily
The Northern winds are breaking;
The Northern Lights are shaking
Their fire-flags in the sky.
Sound the signal of awaking;
Sound the onset wild and high!
Country and Liberty!
Freedom and Victory!
These words shall be our cry, —
Frémont and Victory!"

At a Frémont meeting in Amesbury in July, 1856, Mr. Whittier was chairman of a committee on resolutions, and introduced a series which express the belief that "the Divine Providence has not mocked us with this great occasion, without the means to meet it." And Frémont is spoken of as "a man whose romantic achievements stir the blood of the young, and whose modesty, prudence, and sound principles commend him to the favor of the conservative, as one whose middle years are rich in varied experience, and to whom wisdom is gray hairs, and an unspotted life old age."

In a moment of sanguine hope of the success of the Free-Soil movement in 1856, Mr. Whittier wrote to Moses A. Cartland: "Ah me! I wish I had strength to do what I see should be done! But all I *can* do shall be done. I am not apt to be very sanguine, but I certainly have strong hopes of Frémont's election. I think I see the finger of Providence in his nomination. It appeals to all that is good and generous in Young America. It touches the popular heart." On the same sheet

his sister Elizabeth wrote, beginning with a reference to the assault upon Sumner: "What sad, strange times are these! We have felt that the splendid life, so precious, has been in extreme danger. And then, poor Kansas! With the noble men and women doing far more than the old times ever called for, it would be very dark and sad, only for the hope we have in our brave young leader. The music of Freedom is in his very name. We shall surely find our way again, with Frémont at our head. I send thee this Quaker song of Greenleaf's — it was sung at our Frémont meeting." The song which was inclosed has not been found or identified. This letter was written in July, and "Sound the Trumpet" was not published until September.

The poem "What of the Day?" was written in the height of the excitement of the presidential contest, when the friends of Freedom were feeling somewhat confident of winning the day. It shows that Whittier did not share the bright hopes of those who expected to crush the barbaric institution of slavery without resort to anything harsher than the ballot. There is in it a prophetic intimation of the deadly war which was to rage five years later, and he expresses his gratitude that he had lived to take part in the preparatory struggle, while the gathering hosts were in "the Valley of Decision:" —

> "I fain would thank Thee that my mortal life
> Has reached the hour (albeit through care and pain)
> When Good and Evil, as for final strife,
> Close dim and vast on Armageddon's plain;
> And Michael and his angels once again

Drive howling back the Spirits of the Night.
Oh, for the faith to read the signs aright
And from the angle of Thy perfect sight
See Truth's white banner floating on before,
And the Good Cause, despite of venal friends
And base expedients, move to noble ends:
See Peace with Freedom make to Time amends,
And, through its cloud of dust, the threshing-floor,
Flailed by the thunder, heaped with chaffless grain!"

The other poems which belong to this campaign are "The Pass of the Sierra," "To Pennsylvania," "A Song for the Time," and the song beginning, "Beneath thy Skies, November." The following interesting reference to "The Pass of the Sierra" is made in a letter written by Jessie Benton Frémont to Mr. Whittier, from Pocaho, N. Y., March 5, 1868: —

"The General had a case before the Supreme Court which has kept him some weeks in Washington, and yesterday, when he made time for a day at home with us, among other things he had to tell us was that a young lady has been introduced to him who had been on quite a tour in the California mountains, — to the Yo Semite, and into the Sierra Nevada. The point of it to us was that she told the General that on the first night they camped out in the Yo Semite mountains she could not sleep for the wildness and beauty made by the 'camp-fire's wall of dark.' When we lived two dreary years of enforced patience, waiting for the law's delay, in that same mountain country, I cut out and pasted to the wall, by the General's dressing-glass, where he had to see it daily, those lines of yours. Many and many a time when the

troubles of business depressed him, these words with their grand ideas, and the memories of a nobler life, put fresh heart into him. The young lady's quotation [from "The Pass of the Sierra"] reminded us of those times, and we talked them over, sitting again by a country home fireside — the wood fire, the dogs lying on the hearth, the pines loaded with snow, all as it used to be in the mountains, but within — health and peace and rest."

The earnest abolitionists of these days made public the confession of their faith in every possible way. One device was to print anti-slavery pictures and mottoes upon the envelopes of their letters, which gave offense to postmasters, who were usually pro-slavery in their sentiments, and there was complaint that many letters adorned with these "incendiary" legends failed to reach their destination. During the Kansas troubles the phrase "Border Ruffian" came to be applied to the party of the administration. This explains an allusion in the following letter from Mr. Whittier to Lydia Maria Child, written June 12, 1856 : —

"Thy book, most welcome of itself, was received a day or two ago, with the kind note accompanying it. I have never received the letter to which thee alluded. The Border Ruffian official, perhaps, withheld it on account of its 'image and *superstition*.' I shall try and find it, however, for I am not willing to lose a word of love and kindness from one I have so long loved and honored. I the more regret the destruction of the letter, as I see by thy note that my silence gave thee pain.

God forbid that I should forget or neglect an early and much loved friend! When we have reached middle years, and begin to tread the sunset declension of life, it is not easy to make new friends or give up old ones. Long before I knew thee I had read thy writings, and honored thee for thy noble efforts in the cause of freedom. Since then I have had no occasion to qualify my respect and admiration, or to regard thy friendship as anything less than one of the blessings which the Divine Providence has bestowed upon me — in more than compensation for whatever trifling sacrifices I have made for the welfare of my fellow-men."

The following letter to Mrs. Child was written in reply to one suggesting that he offer consolation to a mutual friend then in affliction: "I thank thee for thy kind letter. I had before seeing thee anticipated thy suggestion as respects Mrs. L——. I called on her just as she was leaving Beverly, urged to do so by an impulse which I could not resist. Her great sorrow and its holy consolations deeply impressed me. I was truly glad to meet thee, in Boston. It is the pleasantest reminiscence of my visit. My sister joins with me in hoping we may see thee under our roof."

The poem "The Mayflowers" was written in 1856, and the concluding stanzas of it show that a thought of the impending presidential campaign was in the poet's mind as he wrote it: —

> "The Pilgrim's wild and wintry day
> Its shadow round us draws;
> The Mayflower of his stormy bay,
> Our Freedom's struggling cause.

"But warmer suns erelong shall bring
To life the frozen sod;
And through dead leaves of hope shall spring
Afresh the flowers of God!"

This poem was suggested by a gift of mayflowers sent Mr. Whittier by a friend residing in Plymouth, Mass., on the 30th of April, 1856. The note accompanying the flowers has this passage, from which the poem grew: "You know the mayflower with us is *the* flower, and all our people gather them at this season and send them to their friends who have them not. There is such meaning in the mayflower to all descendants of the Pilgrims and to all lovers of freedom."

After the election, he wrote the "Song inscribed to the Frémont Clubs," in which he took a cheerful view of the situation, foretelling the success that was to come in 1860: —

"For God be praised! New England
Takes once more her ancient place;
Again the Pilgrim banner
Leads the vanguard of the race.

"Then sound again the bugles,
Call the muster-roll anew;
If months have well-nigh won the field,
What may not four years do?"

After the death of Mr. Mussey the plates and copyright of the illustrated edition of Whittier's poems came into the hands of Sanborn, Carter, Bazin & Co. In 1857, Mr. Whittier, who was pleased with the blue and gold edition of Longfellow, wished to make a complete collection of his own works, to be published in the same neat and

popular form. He had written much since he had sold his copyrights of all earlier poems to Mussey, but it would be necessary for him to regain possession of these old copyrights before the new complete edition could be published. He had not the means at the time to make the purchase, but the matter was negotiated for him by Mr. Fields, and the blue and gold edition was published in 1857. The first correspondence in regard to it which is before us is a letter of Whittier's dated January 4, probably written upon receipt of Longfellow's blue and gold volumes: "Longfellow's poems are always welcome. I like your new edition exceedingly, and wish some means can be devised to get my verses into a similar shape. I wish I could get hold of the Mussey volume. I would prefer to have one publisher, of course. . . . A great many thanks, dear F., for thy kind response to my verses ["The Last Walk in Autumn"]. The poem was written for thee and such as thee, for the friends the good God has given me. I did not expect the public at large to see much in it. The weather deals harshly with me, and I cannot leave home without suffering a great deal. The worst of it is that a large part of the time I can neither write nor read."

Fields replied in regard to the Mussey book, on the 12th of January: "I have been trying for a long time to get that big volume of your poems out of Mussey's hands, with reference to bringing you out complete, as we have done Longfellow. Your poems are now held by Sanborn, Carter, Bazin & Co., the successors of Mussey, and I

have failed as yet to bring them to terms. In whatever I have attempted to do, I have had your interest in mind. I am still negotiating, and hope I may yet be successful. You had better not write to them at present on the subject."

In a few weeks the matter was arranged, and Mr. Whittier at once set about the revision of his works. On the 5th of March he wrote: —

"I have marked for *omission* some eight or ten pieces, and have a great desire to wipe out others. Indeed, if I could have my way I would strike out the long Indian poem. In other words, I would kill Mogg Megone over again. I think the poem has some degree of merit, but it is not in good taste, and the subject is by no means such as I would now choose. I have objections to it not merely from an artistic point of view, but a moral one also. But I refer the matter to thee, whether Mogg can be omitted. I send an ambrotype just taken in this village, which my friends think an excellent likeness, barring a slight grip of the mouth, giving it a little twist by way of variety. Never mind that; twists are natural to men of one idea."

The portrait in the first volume of the blue and gold edition is from the ambrotype to which reference is made in the letter just quoted. On the 11th of March he wrote to Fields, who had objected to the omissions he proposed: —

"So, then, I must still carry the burden of my poetical sins! Is there no way to lay the ghosts of unlucky rhymes? As for Mogg Megone, he is

very far from pleasant company, but I see by thy letter that it is idle to think of shaking the tough old rascal off. Let him ride then — bad luck to the ugly face of him! I had no business to make him, and it is doubtless poetical justice that he should haunt me like another Frankenstein. But I insist on dropping 'The Response,' 'Stanzas for the Times, 1844,' 'Address at the Opening of Pennsylvania Hall,' and 'The Album.' Their place is more than filled by the pieces added and sent with the book. I have some eight or ten pieces written within the past year which I will send as soon as I can get them together. . . . [He refers again to the ambrotype sent, from which to engrave a portrait.] The ambrotype process gives the hair and complexion a blanched look, whereas my hair is black and but sprinkled with gray sufficiently to give me the *external* sign of wisdom."

The four poems named in this letter, which he insists on dropping, are omitted from the blue and gold volumes, but two of them may be found in the edition of 1888. Of these two one is the "Address at the Opening of Pennsylvania Hall," and the other is "Stanzas for the Times, 1844," which is now entitled "The Sentence of John L. Brown."

Even when Whittier was in his most pressing pecuniary straits, he was devising liberal things for his friends who were more needy than he. Beside putting his hand in his own pocket, he called upon his more prosperous friends for contributions, and among those upon whom he found he

could always rely were Mr. Fields, his publisher, and Mr. Haskell, editor of the Boston "Evening Transcript." In later years, George W. Childs, of Philadelphia, with characteristic generosity desired Whittier to draw upon him for any charity in which he was interested. Here is a letter to Fields of May 1, 1857, asking help for a friend who had been dear to Whittier from childhood: —

"As thee is not one who wearies in well-doing, let me ask of thee to see friend Haskell of the 'Transcript,' and ask him to help set on foot a subscription for the benefit of ——, the historian, who is now sick in mind and body, at W. A kinder-hearted, quainter, and more genial man never lived than he. He has done a great deal of good in collecting material for the future historian and novelist. Let the subscription take the shape of a testimonial for his eminent services as a historian and antiquarian. If Haskell will act as treasurer, I will send my subscription to him."

Fields replied the same day: —

"I will speak to Haskell to-morrow about poor Mr. ——, whom I never saw but once or twice; but as he is your friend, he shall have five dollars from a friend of yours, whose name is synonymous with *Meadows*. I will stir Haskell up to write of him in the 'Transcript,'

> "'And he shall say a good word for him,
> Igo and ago;
> Else may Old Nick to shoe-strings chew him,
> Iram, coram, dago.'

Let me whisper to you, if at any time you find your pockets light, it will give me great pleasure per-

sonally to shovel in a few 'rocks,' to be returned at any time when most convenient to you — or if they should never come back it would be better still. My hand is still lame, but I can sign a check at any time, if a friend needs it."

To this Whittier replied: —

"I am sorry for thy lame hand, but be thankful that thee are not an old bachelor, and lame all over with rheumatism, as I am. Emerson's 'May Day' is charming, — full of wisdom and sweetness. Thy parody of Captain Grose set me rhyming when I sat down to write to thee: —

"Dear F. will take a friendly pride in
The absent hand and heart confiding,
And if then any are deriding
That plea of Haskell's,
We 'll count the cautious robes they hide in
As sheer wrap rascals!

"Oh, well-paid author, fat-fed scholar,
Whose pockets jingle with the dollar!
No sheriff's hand upon your collar,
No duns to bother,
Think on 't; a tithe of what you swallow
Would save your brother!

"More blest is he among the living
Who gives than he who is receiving:
And that last robe which Time is weaving
To bear us off in
Shall be the lighter for our giving
A lift to ——.

"And now Heaven help the old and poor
And keep the gaunt wolf from his door!
I send for lack of silver ore
These paper shadows:
Thou 'lt add, I 'm sure, as many more,
My dear friend — *Meadows.*

"So shall the public crowd and mingle
Where'er thou hangest out thy shingle,
And all the joys the happy ingle
Of human love yields
Be thine, and blessings never single
Add Fields to Fields!"

A few days later Mr. Whittier wrote: "I am rejoiced to hear of the success of the subscription. Some ladies from —— have just called on me with the agreeable intelligence that our worthy old friend has so far recovered as to be able to return to his home. If now we can raise $200 for him it will enable him to hold the old house where his ancestors for many generations have lived, and set the old man on his legs again, and warm and gladden his heart. His bodily and mental health seems now very nearly restored, and he fully appreciates every kindness."

The ballad of "The Sycamores," which tells the legend of the row of trees planted by the merry Irishman, Hugh Tallant, on the left bank of the Merrimac, below Haverhill, was published in 1857. Very soon after its publication a descendant of Tallant, Caroline L. Tallant of Nantucket, Mass., wrote to Mr. Whittier making inquiries. As first printed, the name was spelled "Talent," and the writer of the letter was not quite sure that her ancestor was the person referred to in the poem. She wrote for information on this point, and added: —

"It is traditionary lore in our family, that three Tallant brothers, of whom one was Hugh, came over from Ireland and settled in New Hampshire, and that from them descended all who bear the

name of Tallant in America. My grandfather, Andrew Tallant, was the son of Hugh. He died last spring in Pelham, N. H., on the old homestead which was left him by his father. I remember having seen one other son of Hugh. When I was quite young one of my uncles took me to ride from Concord to Pelham, and on the way he stopped at an old brown house, quite in the woods, that I might see his uncle Hugh. That Hugh Tallant was living, when last we knew anything of him, in Pembroke, N. H., and must be now about eighty-eight years old. Then my uncle has told me of another uncle of his, George, whom he remembers as having some skill in 'fiddle' playing. That is one of the links in my chain of evidence, because he must have inherited the gift from his father. Hugh and George are all my grandfather's brothers of whom I know. On the back of a coat of arms, I have found the date of Hugh Tallant's death as 1795, and his *supposed* age 108 or 110 years. My grandfather used to tell us story-loving children that his father was a 'spry old man' — 'over a hundred when he died,' and then he would relate to our great pride and satisfaction, how he had seen his father, when over seventy years old, leap over, by putting his hand on the neck of one of them, two horses placed side by side. He used to tell us too that his father saw the 'Battle of the Boyne' in old Ireland, and Hugh Tallant was almost as much a hero for admiration as Washington. But it was with young eyes he saw the bloodshed of his countrymen, for he was held a child in arms on the battle-field.

The battle of the Boyne was July 1, 1690, which would make Hugh Tallant only 105 in 1795 — not agreeing exactly with the statement on the coat of arms. Your ballad says, —

> "'One long century hath been numbered,
> And another half way told,
> Since the rustic Irish gleeman
> Broke for them the virgin mould.'

"Hugh Tallant, a hundred and fifty years ago, was an Irish youth of seventeen or twenty, with all the poetry of his nature fresh and uncrushed within him — and so it was just the age for him to disclose his musical and fun-loving disposition. Did your Hugh wander round from town to town with his fiddle and his pack? I know scarcely anything excepting what I have told of my great-grandfather. He lived in Atkinson at one time, and then he lived in Pelham. He owned at one time thousands of acres of land in and about the latter town, but he sold them carelessly away for almost nothing."

To this Mr. Whittier replied: —

"Thy letter took me almost as much by surprise as the entrance of the veritable and venerable Hugh himself would have done. When I wrote the poem in question, I never expected that a fair descendant of the Milesian tree-planter would be called up. In fact, Hugh Talent was to me a pleasant myth, a shadowy phantom of tradition only. Since receiving thy letter I have ascertained for a certainty that the Hugh of my ballad and thy great-grandfather are one and the same. I am not sure of the date of planting the trees, but it was

certainly in the early part of the eighteenth century. Hugh at that time was a resident of Haverhill, on the Merrimac, now a town of some ten thousand inhabitants. The trees, twenty of which are now standing, he planted on the river bank, before the mansion of Colonel Richard Saltonstall, brother of Governor Saltonstall, of Connecticut.

"The tradition of him is pretty correctly given in the ballad. After leaving Atkinson [N. H.], then a part of Haverhill, he moved to Pelham or Windham, became a considerable landholder, and was noted for his love of fun and lawsuits. He took the Tory side in the Revolution, was outlawed, shot at, and driven off by his neighbors, but soon managed to return. These latter facts I have just learned. I wish they had been before me, as well as those of thy own letter, when I was writing 'The Sycamores.' The trees are about twelve miles up the river from my residence [in Amesbury]. I should like to show them to a descendant of the merry troubadour who planted them. I give the name as it stands in the Haverhill records, — Talent. I presume it should be Tallant. Of course, thou art at liberty to alter it in the poem. The incident of Washington is true."

Miss Caroline Tallant made the following lively response: —

"Very few of *old* Hugh's many-acred farms have descended to us, but I am more than content with *young* Hugh's bequest to me. How thoughtful in the youth to look down the long future and know of the poet yet to come, whose song and own handwriting and special message I should be

most pleased with, and then with his Irish wit to set about gaining them for me by planting trees on the river-side. My matronly sister insists upon dashing my enthusiasm by reminding me that possibly Hugh may have planted the trees with no higher aim than that of earning his dinner by his labor. I scorn that idea, however, and will not be convinced that the young man would as contentedly have dug post-holes all day. He planted the trees because he loved trees and flowers, and birds, and everything beautiful, natural, and free, and I am going to have him sainted for it, and a day awarded on the family calendar. Saint Hugh's day shall be duly honored with Thanksgiving festivities. His ballad shall be read, and we will not forget, with our toast to his memory, the memory of the singer who has sung both of him and of the 'sea-beat island,' — the only spot we call our home."

In Mirick's "History of Haverhill," under date of 1739, may be found this item, which evidently gave the suggestion of the ballad to the poet, as we find in Mr. Whittier's copy of the book the first draft of a stanza of the poem written on the margin of the page that contains this passage: —

"About this time, the sycamore-trees, now standing before Widow Samuel W. Duncan's mansion, were set out. The work was done by one Hugh Talent, a wanderer from the green fields of Erin, and who was a famous fiddler. He lived with Colonel Richard Saltonstall, in the capacity of a servant, and tradition says that he frequently made harmonious sounds with his cat-gut and rosin

for the gratification of the village swains and lasses."

In the edition of 1873, there is an error in the twenty-eighth stanza of "The Sycamores:" —

> "But the trees the gleeman planted,
> Through the changes, changeless stand,
> As the marble calm of Tadmor
> *Marks* the desert's shifting sand."

The word should be "mocks," and this is the reading in the latest editions.

CHAPTER IX.

"THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY."

1857–1860.

In 1857, it had happened that nearly all the eminent writers of the North, and particularly in Massachusetts, had come out on the side of freedom, while the lawyers, some clergymen, the merchants and politicians, were as a class either silent upon the subject, or actively in opposition to the Liberty party.[1] The leading magazines and newspapers were not hospitable to free thought and expression on the theme that was uppermost in the public mind. Editors and publishers of periodicals having a general circulation were shy of writers who, like Whittier, Lowell, Sumner, Mrs. Stowe, and Emerson, were determined to speak plainly upon a subject that was tabooed in society. The other leading writers of New England in these days had, most of them, sources of income outside of their literary work. But Whittier, no longer acting as a paid secretary of an anti-slavery

[1] Even the Society of Friends, originally quite active in all philanthropic work, had begun to refuse anti-slavery speakers the use of their meeting-houses. It was to counteract this tendency that Joseph Sturge and Whittier visited Newport and Philadelphia and labored with the Yearly Meetings, without success. Whittier was so much grieved that for several years he avoided the Yearly Meetin

society, and not accepting calls to the lecture platform, had no resource but his small salary as corresponding editor of the "National Era," the occasional sale of a poem to some other periodical, and the royalty on his books, which at that time did not amount to much. His mother, his sister, and himself were frequently ill, and therefore it is not to be wondered at that about this time his finances were at the lowest ebb, and there was a prospect that he might be obliged to mortgage his homestead. In this emergency Joseph Sturge, of England, again came to his relief, through the instrumentality of the large-hearted New York merchant, Lewis Tappan. Whittier was reluctant to accept help, but grateful to those who stood by him in his need. The "Atlantic Monthly," which was started in 1857, was of material assistance to him in this strait, as it paid him better for his work than any other periodical had done. The better sale of his books was also bringing gradual relief, but it was not until the publication of "Snow-Bound," in 1866 that the straitened condition referred to was permanently relieved.

It occurred to Mr. Francis H. Underwood to combine the powers of the eminent liberty-loving writers of the North in a magazine which by its ability should command a hearing in circles in which hitherto the word "slavery" was not to be spoken above the breath. He was successful in securing the coöperation he wished, and at a dinner given by Mr. Phillips, the publisher, in the summer of 1857, there were present Longfellow,

The Amesbury Home

Emerson, Whittier, Lowell, Holmes, Motley, Edmund Quincy, and other writers of high reputation. The plans for the new magazine were discussed and arranged at this dinner. Mr. Underwood nominated Lowell as editor-in-chief, and his name was received with enthusiasm. Holmes suggested the name "The Atlantic Monthly." The success of the enterprise was assured from the start, and a new era in American literature was inaugurated.

Mr. Whittier now found a field for his literary activity close at home, in a magazine which promised to be hospitable to ideas of reform, although not pledged to any party. The hearty coöperation had been secured not only of well-known abolitionists like Whittier, Theodore Parker, Mrs. Stowe, and Lowell, but of the more purely literary coterie of poets, novelists, essayists, and historians, like Longfellow, Holmes, Emerson, Motley, Prescott, Whipple, and Trowbridge. These writers, working harmoniously together, gave a new impulse to American literature. There was a freedom in the discussion of moral and political questions such as had not previously been ventured upon in literary periodicals. Underwood says: —

"The 'Atlantic' was mainly devoted to belles-lettres, and was intended, first of all, to be entertaining; but every number contained a political article by Parke Godwin or Lowell, and the public understood and felt that this was the point of the plowshare that was to break up the old fields. A plethora of discussion, of invective, or of passionate appeal, such as had been employed in the anti-slavery journals, would have swamped the

magazine, or destroyed its influence with the classes to be reached. All the contributors, including the old abolitionists, were content to leave questions of politics to the editor. Whittier's poems for the first three years were upon general subjects, with the single exception of 'Le Marais du Cygne,' written upon a massacre by pro-slavery ruffians in Kansas."

The poem he contributed to the first number of the new magazine was "The Gift of Tritemius." This was followed by "Skipper Ireson's Ride," "The Old Burying-Ground," "Telling the Bees," "The Swan Song of Parson Avery," and other legends and ballads now reckoned among the classics of our literature. James Russell Lowell was the first editor, and F. H. Underwood his assistant. To them he sent, soon after the publication of the first number, the copy of "Skipper Ireson's Ride," with the following note to Mr. Lowell: —

"The first number is excellent. I send for December (I hope in season) a bit of a Yankee ballad, the spirit of which pleases me more than the execution. Will it do? Look at it, and use the freedom of an old friend towards it and its author. The incident occurred sometime in the last century. The refrain is the actual song of the women on this march. To relish it, one must understand the peculiar tone and dialect of the ancient Marbleheaders."

Mr. Lowell consulted with his assistant, and both of them wrote to Mr. Whittier suggesting the use of dialect in the burthen. Mr. Lowell's letter, dated Cambridge, November 4, 1857, is as follows:

"I thank you heartily for the ballad, which will go into the next number. I like it all the better for its provincialism — in all fine pears, you know, we can taste the old *pucker*. I know the story well. I am familiar with Marblehead and its dialect, and as the burthen is intentionally provincial I have taken the liberty to print it in such a way as shall give the peculiar accent, thus: —

> "'Cap'n Ireson for his horrd horrt
> Was torred and feathered and corried in a corrt.'

That 's the way I 've always 'horrd it' — only it began, 'Old Flud Ireson.' What a good name Ireson (son of wrath) is for the hero of such a history!

"You see that 'Tritemius' is going the rounds. I meant to have sent you the proofs, and to have asked you to make a change in it where these four rhymes come together (assonances, I mean) — 'door,' 'poor,' 'store,' 'more.' It annoyed me, but I do not find that any one else has been troubled by it, and everybody likes the poem. I am glad that the Philistines have chosen some verses of mine[1] for their target, not being able to comprehend the bearing of them. I mean I am glad that they did it rather than pick out those of any one else for their scapegoat. I shall not let you rest till I have got a New England pastoral out of you. This last is cater-cousin to it, at least, being a piscatorial. . . . The sale of Maga. has been very good considering the times, and I think you will find the second number better than the first.

[1] Mr. Lowell refers to "The Origin of Didactic Poetry," which was his first poem in the *Atlantic*.

"If you do not wish the burthen so spelt will you write me?"

To this Mr. Whittier replied: —

"I leave the matter of the burthen of my ditty to thy better judgment. As to the spelling, the substitution of 'corried' for 'rid' does not suit me so well, but I am not particularly strenuous about it. Would it not be well to put it in italics, and with quotation marks, thus: '*Here 's Cap'n Ireson*,' etc. Instead of '*was* tarred and feathered' it should read as I have it, 'Tarred and feathered,' and the provincial spelling should only be used when the women are represented as singing, 'Here 's Cap'n Ireson,' etc. Where *I* repeat it, the odd spelling and the quotation marks should be omitted. At least, so it strikes me. I had just sent thee a line, when I received thine. In it I suggest an alteration of a single line. The 'pastoral' shall be thought of. 'The Witch's Daughter' was an attempt of the kind, but not entirely satisfactory. I may possibly do better. I am uncertain what to say as to the money suggestion. All I know is that such an article as 'Cap'n Ireson' would bring me fifty dollars from another source. It is not worth it, perhaps. I shall set no price upon my pieces, but shall leave the matter to the publishers, who can best judge what they are worth. I have suffered in my small way in these hard times, and am beginning to feel that my creditors will not have the Christian grace to forgive my debts. The state of my health — which makes the writing of a letter a painful burthen — renders it necessary that I should receive

the value of what I am able to do. . . . I am glad to hear that the magazine is doing so well, and thanking thee for thy kind suggestions, I am very truly thy friend.

"P. S. Since writing this, have received a line from F. H. Underwood, with the proof. I have, on further consideration, adopted your suggestions as to the refrain, and written him accordingly."

The story of "Skipper Ireson" was told to Mr. Whittier by a schoolmate at the Academy, who came from Marblehead, and he first began to write it out under the Hugh Tallant sycamores in 1828. It was not finished, however, for nearly thirty years. He supposed it was a tradition of the last century, — was not aware that the poor man who was so harshly treated was a contemporary of his own; for the poet was nearly a year old when the Skipper took his ride.[1]

There was much inquiry of Mr. Whittier in regard to the line in "Skipper Ireson's Ride," referring to "one-eyed Calendar's horse of brass." As a specimen of the letters he received, take this

[1] An authentic version of the story of Captain Benjamin Ireson may be found in the *History and Traditions of Marblehead*, by Samuel Roads, Jr. Of this Mr. Whittier said in a letter to Mr. Roads: —

"I have now no doubt that thy version of Skipper Ireson is the correct one. My verse was solely founded on a fragment of rhyme which I heard from one of my early schoolmates, a native of Marblehead. I supposed the story to which it referred dated back at least a century. I knew nothing of the particulars, and the narrative of the ballad was pure fancy. I am glad, for the sake of truth and justice, that the real facts are given in thy book. I certainly would not knowingly do injustice to any one, dead or living."

one from Gail Hamilton, written from Washington, April 4, 1882: —

"What do you mean by 'one-eyed Calendar's horse of brass'? I have always trotted him calmly up and down as the famous horse of brass on which the Tartar king did ride — but when I turn to the Tartar king himself, I do not see any one-eyed Calendar among the Cambuscans bold. I thought I knew all about it, but find I don't. I went up to the Congressional library yesterday, and even Mr. Spofford, who knows everything, knew not this. Master Whittier, rise and explain! I am sure there never was any such person. Thee made it all up."

Whether Mr. Whittier ever answered this question we do not know, but if he had looked up his authorities, he would have been obliged to confess that his memory had proved treacherous in regard to the tale of the one-eyed Calendar in the "Arabian Nights." There were three Calendars, and it was not the one with the horse of brass who had his eye switched out by his horse's tail. The one with the black horse was he whom Whittier had in mind. But, as Gail Hamilton says, in a letter to the editor of this work: "I have no right to quarrel with any kind of a horse he chose to bestride. If not the Arabian's, so much the worse for Arabia!"

After forwarding "Skipper Ireson," and before hearing from it, he sent to Lowell "The Eve of Election," with the following note, dated October 4: "I send thee a night piece, which, if not as good as Parnell's, has at least the merit of present-

ing American ideas, and the philosophy of Christian Democracy. It pleases me, but that is no reason that it should anybody else. If it can have a place in the magazine for December, it is at thy service — if not, please return it. What 's thy decision as to Cap'n Ireson ? "

As "Skipper Ireson" was published in the December number, "The Eve of Election" was necessarily postponed, and it occurred to Mr. Whittier that it had better be sent to a weekly, that it might appear somewhat nearer to the election season for which it was written. He therefore wrote to Lowell, in December, offering to substitute for it another poem, "The Old Burying-Ground." The little piece of his sister's mentioned in his letter was "The Wedding Veil," which was published in the "Atlantic," and may be found in "Whittier's Poetical Works," vol. iv., p. 298 : —

"I am inclined to think that 'The Eve of Election' is better adapted, if published at all, to the 'National Era' than to the 'Atlantic.' If thou wilt return it to me I will send in exchange another piece which I like very well, but which for my own sake, as well as that of the magazine, I wish thee and friend Underwood to return to me if it seems to you advisable, regarding it, as you should do, entirely from a critical point of view. This little piece purloined from my sister's writing-desk be good enough to return also, if not likely to be used, as she misses the manuscript, and suspects me of some mischief. I was in Boston a day or two ago, but had not time nor health to visit Cambridge, as I intended. Why don't you get

Frémont to give you a paper on his mountain experiences? His is a graphic pen, and an article from him would do something for the magazine."

Mr. Lowell wrote that "The Eve of Election" would be held back, and Mr. Whittier then forwarded the promised lines about the old burying-ground[1] with this note: —

"I thank thee for holding back my election verses. I send thee herewith a picture of one of the features of our New England scenery — the old 'buryin'-ground.' I hope it will meet thy approval, although it does [not] come up to my conception in all respects. The severe sickness of my mother has prevented my giving any thought to it since it was written. I shall be glad to surprise my sister with her printed verses in the stately 'Atlantic.'"

On the first day of January, 1858, Mr. Whittier sent Fields some suggestions of changes in his burying-ground poem, and announced the death of his mother: "The entire piece has now to me a deep and solemn significance. It was written in part while watching at the sick-bed of my dear mother — now no longer with us. She passed away a few days ago, in the beautiful serenity of a Christian faith — a quiet and peaceful dismissal. The mighty bereavement overwhelms us. May God enable us to bear it, and improve its holy lesson!"

On the 10th of January, 1858, Mr. Sumner sent this note from Boston: —

[1] This poem was written with a thought of the ancient cemetery at East Haverhill, near Rocks Village.

"I constantly think of you and long for the sound of your voice or at least the sight of your most welcome hand-writing. How fares the world with you? And chiefly, how is your health? I have had for some time disability enough to secure a respite for you. But mine, thank God! is passing away — slowly but surely. Meanwhile I am doomed to silence and repose. This is hard — very hard, and at times makes me very unhappy. God bless you! dear Whittier."

This is Whittier's reply, written the next day:

"During the last few weeks I have been watching by the bedside of my dear mother, — following her in love and sympathy to the very entrance of the valley of shadows. She is no longer with us. The end was one of exceeding peace — a quiet and beautiful dismissal. We are stunned by the great bereavement. The world looks far less than it did when she was with us. Half the motive power of life is lost. . . . I meant to have seen thee before the session and visited Boston. My dear mother, then ill, urged me to go, as she wished me to see thee and Colonel Frémont, who was then in the city. . . . Only think of it — Democracy divided against itself — Douglas against Buchanan! Thee can afford to be silent, when the Divine Providence looks, as of old, from clouds of fire, and troubles the tent of the Egyptians and takes off their chariot wheels so that they drive heavily."

The next poem sent to the "Atlantic" was "The Bees of Fernside," afterward entitled "Telling the Bees." It was sent to Lowell in a note

dated February 16, 1858: "I send thee a bit of rhyme which pleases me, and yet I am not quite sure about it. What I call simplicity may be only silliness, and my poor bantling only fit to be handed over to Dr. Howe's school for feeble-minded children. But I like it and hope better things of it. Look it over and let me hear from thee, if but a line."

Six days later he wrote to make some changes. The allusion in the last sentence of the following note is to the fact that he had been recently elected an overseer of Harvard College,[1] in which institution Lowell was a professor. "I wish to hear from thee in regard to the piece — if thou hast any doubts about it, send it back to me, without troubling thyself to explain why or wherefore. I shall be sure it is for good and sufficient reason. But at any rate let me hear from thee in some way. If thee fail to do this, I shall turn thee out of thy professor's chair, by virtue of my new office of overseer."

The place Mr. Whittier had in mind in writing "Telling the Bees" was his birthplace. There were beehives on the garden terrace near the well-sweep, occupied, perhaps, by the descendants of Thomas Whittier's bees. The approach to the house from over the northern shoulder of Job's

[1] In February, 1858, Mr. Whittier was elected by the legislature a member of the Board of Overseers of Harvard College. In 1860 the honorary degree of Master of Arts was conferred upon him by the college, and in 1886, at the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary celebration of the college, he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. He was elected a member of the Board of Trustees of Brown University in 1869.

Hill by a path that was in constant use in his boyhood, and is still in existence, is accurately described in the poem. The "gap in the old wall" is still to be seen, and "the stepping-stones in the shallow brook" are still in use. His sister's garden was down by the brookside in front of the house, and her daffodils are perpetuated, and may now be found in their season each year in that place. The red-barred gate, the poplars, the cattle-yard with "the white horns tossing over the wall," — these were all part of Whittier's boy life on the old farm. Even the touch of "the sundown's blaze on her window-pane" is realistic. The only place from which the blaze of the setting sun could be seen reflected in the windows of the old mansion was from the path so perfectly described, and no doubt the poet had often noticed the phenomenon in his youth while approaching the house in this direction. All the story that is woven into the ballad about "Mary" and her lover is of course wholly imaginative. The poem was written more than twenty years after Mr. Whittier's removal to Amesbury, and his sister Mary was still living.

On the 20th of January, 1858, Mr. Whittier wrote to Mr. Underwood: "Some days ago I sent my friend Lowell a copy of some lines, 'The Pipes at Lucknow.'[1] I am not certain what his judgment was concerning them. If, however, he submitted them to thee, and there is any probability of their appearance in the 'Monthly,' I would like to make an alteration in the last few lines of the first stanza, and to interpolate one

[1] Afterward recalled, and printed in the *National Era*.

stanza.[1] . . . If friend Lowell, however, thinks the lines not quite up to the subject, or to his estimate of my ability, he is a true man and a true friend, and will act accordingly."

While this ballad was in Lowell's hands, Whittier sent this note, dated April 10, 1858, suggesting a change, which was made; and the new stanza is one of the finest in the poem: —

"After the verse in 'The Pipes at Lucknow,' closing with these lines, —

> "God be praised! The march of Havelock!
> The piping of the clans!

I propose the insertion of these lines: —

> "Nearer, louder, fierce as vengeance,
> Sharp and shrill as swords at strife,
> Rose and fell MacGregor's clan-call
> Stinging all the air to life.
> But when the far-off dust-cloud
> To plaided legions grew,
> Full tenderly and blithesomely
> The pipes of rescue blew!

It is in strict accordance with the facts of the rescue. In the distance the beleaguered garrison heard the stern and vengeful slogan of the MacGregors, but when the troops of Havelock came in view of the English flag still floating from the Residency, the pipers struck up the immortal air of Burns, 'Should auld acquaintance be forgot.' Excuse my troubling thee, and believe me very truly thy friend."

Whittier's letters to the editors of the "Atlantic" make frequent comment upon the work of

[1] The stanza to which reference is here made is the one beginning —

> "Like the march of soundless music."

other contributors. To Mr. Underwood he wrote in February, 1858: "Dr. Holmes's 'Autocrat' is thrice excellent; the little poem at its close ["The Chambered Nautilus"] is booked for immortality."

This letter to Mr. Underwood, dated 5th 7th mo., 1858, refers to the change of a stanza in "Le Marais du Cygne":—

"I am heartily obliged to thee for thy kind suggestions. But see what has been the result of them! Is the piece better or worse? Who knows? My sister thinks *she* does, and that I have altered it for the better. I hope it will strike thee and Lowell in the same way. The sweep and rhythm please me; but I have had hard work to keep down my indignation. I feel a good deal more like a wild Berserker than like a carpet minstrel, 'with his singing robes about him,' when recording atrocities like that of Swan's Marsh. I want a proof-sheet of it, as soon as may be, to send to Charles Sumner in advance of its publication. . . . There is not a dull page in the last 'Atlantic.' If it could only be kept up to that point it would take the precedence by right of all magazines on either side of the Atlantic."

Whittier's poem "The Cable Hymn," celebrating the completion of the Atlantic cable, was published in the "Atlantic" of October, 1858. In his manuscript it was called "The Great Wire," and it was sent to Mr. Lowell in August. On the 10th of that month, Mr. Whittier wrote to Mr. Underwood:—

"In my haste yesterday I omitted an idea which

seems to me necessary to my little poem on the 'Great Wire.' After the fifth verse add the following: —

"Through Orient seas, o'er Afric's plain,
And Asian mountains borne,
The vigor of the Northern brain
Shall nerve the world outworn.

"From clime to clime, from shore to shore
Shall thrill the magic thread;
The new Prometheus steals once more
The fire that wakes the dead.

"I take it for granted that the September number of the magazine is stereotyped; but you reserve a few pages to notice recent events, and perhaps my little lyric may serve to close your article on the great event of the age. If so, as I suppose I cannot see the proof, please look to it carefully. The value of a poem like this depends upon its timely publication. At the risk of calling to mind 'Mons. Tonson come again,' I venture to suggest for the verse in my poem closing with the line

"Clasp hands beneath the sea,

the following as more clear and definite: —

"And one in heart as one in blood
Shall all her peoples be:
The hands of human brotherhood
Shall clasp beneath the sea.

"The last number of the magazine is 'excellent well.' Emerson is outdoing himself, and the 'Autocrat' is better and better. The love passage between him and the sweet school-mistress is inimitable. Boston Common is henceforth classic ground."

After Taylor's return from Russia and Norway,

in 1858, he was lecturing in New England, and Whittier wrote him this note, dated Amesbury, 10th 12th mo.: "Can thee not make us a call before leaving New England? We want a lecture from thee, and that old pocket-book, which thee remembers was so ostentatiously displayed at the close of thy lecture some years ago, is good for $40. But lecture, or none, come and see us. Our dear mother can no longer welcome thee, but sister and I shall be glad to see thee. Elizabeth expects the feather-pocket from Lofoden!"

The poem now entitled "The Preacher" was originally called "The Great Awakening," and it was sent to the "Atlantic," as was also "The Red River Voyageur," and recalled for publication in the "National Era" by the following note to Lowell, dated December 29, 1858. The same note inclosed a poem that was soon after published in the "Atlantic": "I send herewith 'The Double-Headed Snake of Newbury.' If it is suited for your meridian, use it. As to the other two pieces, 'The Great Awakening,' and 'The Voyageur on the Red River,' do me the favor to return them by the bearer of this, the expressman between your city and Amesbury. I want them immediately. . . . Mrs. Stowe's story ["The Minister's Wooing"] opens admirably. I wish, however, she would give more local coloring and atmosphere to her picture, so that we may know what part of the world we are in, in what age, as respects costume, etc., and what climate. In other respects the tale is very striking in its promise."

"The Double-Headed Snake of Newbury," here

referred to, appeared in the "Atlantic" of March, 1859. "The Northman's written rock," to which reference is made in this poem, was reported to be on a ledge in what is now the town of Groveland, about one fourth of a mile east of the road from West Newbury to Georgetown. The inscription has not been found of late years, but a sketch of it was made in 1854, and published in the "New England Historical and Genealogical Register," vol. viii. The surface of the rock is now mossy and seamed, and undergoing a process of disintegration. In a note to Mr. Underwood about this poem, Whittier says, "My sister thinks it good; and I defer to her judgment — when it is agreeable to my wishes."

"The Red River Voyageur" was suggested by reading a work on Manitoba, by J. W. Bond, who was the historiographer of the expedition of Governor Ramsey to Pembina in 1851. This passage, referring to the vesper bell of St. Boniface, must have been the kernel from which the poem grew: "As I pass slowly along the lonely road that leads me from thee, Selkirk, mine eyes do turn continually to gaze upon thy smiling, golden fields, and the lofty towers of St. Boniface, now burnished with the rays of the departing sun, while the sweet vesper bell reverberates afar and strikes so mournfully pleasant upon mine ear. I feel satisfied that, though absent thousands of weary miles, my thoughts will always dwell on thee with rapturous emotions." This church was burned in 1860. The bells fell and were broken. Their fragments were collected from the ruins, sent to London and recast

by their original founder, and, recrossing the Atlantic, took their place in the tower of the new cathedral of St. Boniface, where their chimes may be heard to-day, on memorable state occasions, very rarely in honor of American personages or events. They greeted General Sherman in 1880, and in 1882, when the Misses Banning of St. Paul, elocutionists, gave an effective rendering of Whittier's poem, the bells were again rung, in their honor, by order of the archbishop.

A scoffer in a Kansas parish was making use of some of the lines in "The Preacher," whereupon a clergyman in the place wrote to Mr. Whittier for an explanation of his meaning. He received the following note in reply, dated March 9, 1891: "The lines referred to by thy lay anti-church friend had no reference to the present time. They were in a poem called 'The Preacher,' and relate to the condition of New England religion just before the 'Great Awakening' or revival under Edwards and Whitefield one hundred and fifty years ago. . . . I think the church and ministry at the present time are most commendably active in works of love and mercy. Our Christianity is becoming practical, caring for the temporal as well as spiritual welfare of the people. More and more the world is learning that the true plan of salvation is love to God and love to man."

The friend to whom reference is made in the prelude to "The Preacher," as accompanying the author in a walk to the summit of the Whittier hill in Amesbury, which overlooks the chain bridge at Deer Island and the steeples of more distant

Newburyport, was Lucy Larcom. In a letter to Miss Larcom, written in 1860, he says: "The poem on Whitefield was written long ago. I added an introduction to it, in which I attempted to describe the sunset in the Merrimac valley, which we looked on together from Whittier hill."

In 1881, Governor John D. Long, of Massachusetts, incorporated in his Thanksgiving proclamation the poem of Whittier's entitled "Garden." The poem was written to be sung at an agricultural and horticultural fair in Amesbury, in 1858. The next year it was translated into Portuguese by Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, and read at a harvest festival. It has been translated into Italian, and sung by peasants at the gathering of the vintage. In this country it has served at the festivals of many state agricultural societies. Under date November 15, 1881, a fortnight before Thanksgiving Day, a lady friend in Boston wrote to Mr. Whittier: "I was coming through a poor street day before yesterday, and in the window of a wretched little shop I saw the broadside upon which the Thanksgiving proclamation was printed. It was a place where the light never seemed to shine, and I saw two wretched-looking wayfarers peering in and reading 'O Painter of the fruits and flowers.' It was one of the highest joys of achievement to see these people reading a poem, perhaps for the first time in their lives, and getting from it something of that 'unreasoning joy' which is the soul's continual warrant of immortality. I felt grateful, as it were, for your sake, if you will forgive this vicarious satisfaction."

The poem "In Remembrance of Joseph Sturge," as originally published in the "Independent," in 1859, lacked the next to the last stanza, which was sent on a proof-sheet that failed to arrive in season: —

> "The forges glow, the hammers all are ringing;
> Beneath its smoky veil,[1]
> Hard by, the city of his love is swinging
> Its clamorous iron flail."

The biting sarcasm of the poem "From Perugia," written in 1859, shows the intensity of interest felt by Whittier in the contest for liberty in Italy. Indeed, wherever among men of any race or nationality there was a revolt against tyranny, to them the quick sympathy of Whittier went out, and he gave it expression as freely as he spoke for the slaves of America. This poem was first called "Rome, 1859," and it was sent in September to the "Atlantic," then edited by James Russell Lowell; soon afterwards Mr. Whittier wrote to F. H. Underwood, assistant editor, recalling the poem, but accidentally failed to mail the note. The following letter to Lowell, dated Amesbury, 10th 10th mo., 1859, gives some further details of the history of the poem: "Some two weeks ago I sent, as I supposed, the inclosed letter to Mr. Underwood, recalling my poem 'Rome, 1859,' and stating that I thought of publishing it elsewhere. By sheer accident, I have just found the letter, which, written during illness, was not put in the post-office, as I supposed. Some days ago I sent a copy of the poem to the 'Independent,' taking it

[1] The word "veil" in many successive editions of Mr. Whittier's works was misprinted "vale."

for granted that all was right as respected the 'Atlantic,' and I fear it is now too late to prevent its appearance in that paper. I have telegraphed to stop it. If, however, the piece is in type and worked off for the magazine, and the 'Independent' also, can you not append a note to that effect?"

This letter was received in season to prevent the publication of the poem in the "Atlantic," and it appeared in the "Independent," October 27, 1859. As first printed, it was without the first four stanzas of "From Perugia," and began: —

"Off with hats, down with knees, shout your vivas like mad."

As in the case of the "Texas" poems in 1844, Whittier and Lowell were in this instance inspired simultaneously with the same theme, and oddly enough they took almost the same title. Whittier first named his poem "Rome, 1859," and afterwards changed it to "From Perugia"; Lowell called his poem at first "Italy, 1859," and it was published in the "Atlantic," December, 1859, three months after he had in his possession the poem of Whittier's, which was recalled. There can be no doubt he had already written his "Italy, 1859," or he would not have taken a title so nearly like Whittier's upon the same subject. In Lowell's collected works this poem is called "Villa Franca, 1859."

Several poems written by Mr. Whittier in 1859 and 1860 bear witness to his sympathy with the struggles and the triumphs of Garibaldi. He had previously written "The Prisoner of Naples" and "The Dream of Pio Nono." The first stanzas of

the poem "In Remembrance of Joseph Sturge" refer to the death of King Bomba of Naples. Then came the poem "Italy," remarkable for its recognition of the necessity of war in some great crises of history; next, "Naples," wherein a father is comforted for the loss of a loved daughter in Italy, by the consideration that she has found her grave in a land at last consecrated to liberty.

On the 8th of December, 1859, Whittier sent this note to Sumner upon his return to his senatorial duties with improved health, and expressed his feelings in regard to the then fresh Harper's Ferry incident:[1] "How glad I am to hear of thy return with increased health! Earlier welcomes thou hast doubtless had, but none warmer than mine. May God, who has restored thee, give thee strength and wisdom for the crisis which in his Providence seems close at hand. I inclose a scrap from our village paper in which I have expressed my views of the Harper's Ferry outbreak. I am anxious that our Republican members of Congress should meet the matter fairly, and unequivocally condemn *all* filibustering, whether for freedom or slavery. I like Trumbull's motion — Harper's Ferry is the natural result of the slaveholders' forays into Kansas, and both should be considered together. The distinction should be made clear between the natural sympathy with the man and approval of his mad and, as I think, most danger-

[1] In a letter to a friend dated December 2, 1859, he says: "What a sad tragedy to-day in Virginia! I feel deep sympathy for John Brown, but deplore from my heart his rash and insane attempt. It injures the cause he sought to serve."

ous and unjustifiable act. The North is sound on this point — there are few who approve of the raid over the border."

In his note in reply to this, under date of December 12, 1859, Mr. Sumner says: "At last I am well again, with only the natural solicitude as to the effect of work and the constant pressure of affairs on a system which is not yet hardened and annealed. My physician enjoins for the present caution and a gradual resumption of my old activities."

The poem called "The Playmate" when first published, and now "My Playmate," was when written called "Eleanor," as will be seen by the following note to James Russell Lowell, written January 10, 1860. The stanza last quoted in this note does not appear in the poem in the magazine; it was probably eliminated in the proof.

"In transcribing 'Eleanor' yesterday I did not give one verse I would like to add now, following the one concluding thus: —

> "The dusky children of the sun
> Before her come and go.

Then add: —

> "There haply with her jeweled hands
> She smooths her silken gown, —
> No more the homespun lap wherein
> I shook the walnuts down.

The verse immediately following I would have read thus: —

> "I linger by her native streams,
> I haunt her hills of pine,
> And wonder if her gold-brown hair
> Is thin and gray as mine.

"Pardon the trouble, and let me have a proof of the piece, if it is printed."

On the 3d of February he wrote in regard to the same poem: "From not receiving the proof I presume my little poem will not appear in the next number of the 'Atlantic.' I would like to see the piece in print before it is irrevocably 'worked off.' My sister tells me the last verse but one is not in keeping with the others; that I have marred by it the simplicity of the poem — that the idea is not fully expressed, etc. I think she is right, and would like to put the following in its place: —

> "The winds so sweet with birch and fern
> A sweeter memory blow;
> And there in spring the veeries sing
> The song of long ago."

Mr. Whittier was not yet quite done with improving this poem. On the 18th of February, he again wrote to Lowell about it. The editor had probably suggested a change of the name of the hills and woods mentioned in the first and last stanzas, and Mr. Whittier selects the musical name of Ramoth: "I have made sad work with the inclosed proof. I have at thy hint dropped the old name, and taken that of another hill, omitting the 'Gilead' which is affixed to it;[1] and to give the thing a local stand-point, I have introduced the neighboring woods of Follymill,[2] famous hereaway for their mayflowers, or ground laurel. I hope

[1] A hill in South Hampton, N. H., only a few miles from Amesbury, used to be called Ramoth-Gilead.

[2] The Follymill woods are frequently referred to in the letters of Mr. Whittier to his friends, usually those written in the season of mayflowers.

it is all the better for the changes. I wish thee to see that the revised proof is all right."

Mrs. Porter reports a conversation with Lord Tennyson, in 1892, in which he said of Whittier's poem "My Playmate," "It is a perfect poem; in some of his descriptions of scenery and wild flowers, he would rank with Wordsworth."

In a letter to Whittier dated January 27, 1860, Mr. Sumner refers to the suspension of the amenities of social life at Washington, such was the bitterness of sectional feeling. The foreign ministers were obliged to invite their guests by sections. Sumner says: "Society is disturbed; the diplomats cannot give a dinner without studying their lists as a protocol."

Here is Whittier's note of congratulation upon Sumner's speech on the "Barbarism of Slavery": "I have just finished reading *the* speech. It is all I could wish for it. It takes the dreadful question out of the region of party and expediency, and holds it up in the clear sun-blaze of truth and reason — in all its deformity, and with the blackness of the pit clinging about it. In the light of that speech the civilized world will now see American slavery as it is. There is something really awful in its Rhadamanthan severity of justice: but it was needed. It especially rejoices thy personal friends to see in the speech such confirmation of thy complete restoration to health and strength of body and mind. It was the task of a giant. Our cause has sustained great loss in the death of Theodore Parker. How he would have rejoiced over thy portraiture of the Barbarism of Slavery!"

In June, 1860, in response to an earnest invitation from Bayard Taylor to visit him at Cedarcroft Whittier wrote: "I have told Elizabeth so much about thy Marie that she wants to see her exceedingly. I hope almost against hope that we shall be able to visit you in your new home this fall, where we will plant our trees of friendship and enjoy ourselves. I wish I was a better traveler; if I could keep pace with you I would join you at the mountains instead of sending this note. I travel a great deal, however, by proxy. I have had thee in my service for many years, very much to my satisfaction. Dr. Booth has been to Timbuctoo for me, and Burton to Mecca. Atkinson has been doing Siberia for me. I think (if thy Marie does not object) of sending thee off again to find Xanadu and Kubla Khan."

All that Mr. Whittier says of "Cobbler Keezar" in his note upon the poem is that "he was a noted character among the first settlers in the valley of the Merrimac," but we find something more about him in Mirick's "History of Haverhill,"[1] and this additional information was no doubt furnished to that work by Mr. Whittier. On the occasion of the Haverhill massacre of August 29, 1708, we are told, the savages were discovered, in the vicinity of the village, by John Keezar, who was returning from Amesbury. He ran into the village, and by firing his gun alarmed the inhabitants, who were sleeping totally unguarded. It was the fact that Keezar was wont to pitch his tent on Po Hill

[1] Page 179. See also *Whittier's Prose Works*, vol. ii., pp. 375, 376.

and mend the foot-gear of the Amesbury people that suggested to the poet the use of his name as the seer of the wonderful vision revealed by the magic lapstone. When this ballad was sent to Fields for the "Atlantic," in 1860, it was accompanied by the following note: "I send thee an absurd ballad which I like *for* its absurdity. Read it, and let me know whether thee think it worth submitting to Lowell. It is just what 'Harper' would like, but I would like better to see it in the Maga., if it is proper for it. I am greatly obliged to the writer of the notice of my poems in the last 'Atlantic,' — Lowell, I suppose. . . . I have used the Yankee word 'woodsy' instead of 'woody' in the ballad."

With such an editor and such a corps of contributors as the "Atlantic Monthly" was favored with, it could not fail of success. Its readers were sure of seeing in each number the best work of the best writers in America, set forth under the skillful editorship of one already recognized as a prince in the realm of letters. Contributors were stimulated and encouraged by receiving adequate payment for their service. The great principles underlying the contest with the slave power were set forth in its editorial pages with entire freedom from the rancor of partisan politics. When the civil war began, the "Atlantic" placed the flag on its cover, and there it remained until the war ended, — an emblem of its devotion to the cause of the Union.

Whittier's prophetic soul recognized the transcendent importance of the issues involved in the

presidential election of 1860, and his political work that year was as earnest and continuous as we have seen it was when he was writing campaign hymns for Frémont and for free Kansas. His lines in "The Summons," published in the "Atlantic" in the summer of 1860, show the devoted spirit of the man. After publishing this poem, he feared that it had a tone of censure for other literary men who had not appeared to realize the gravity of the situation in which their country was placed, and he made this reference to it in a letter to Lucy Larcom: "I do not quite like the tone of 'The Summons,' now that it is published. It was, however, an expression of a state of mind which thee would regard as pardonable if thee knew all the circumstances. It is *too complaining*, and I hope I shall not be left to do such a thing again."

The campaign song "The Quakers are Out!" was written to be sung at a Republican mass meeting held in Newburyport, October 11, 1860. Much anxiety had been expressed during the summer in regard to Pennsylvania, the vote of which State it was thought would decide the contest. If the Quakers could be aroused, Pennsylvania could be counted upon as safe for Abraham Lincoln, and as the state election occurred several weeks before the presidential, the result of that election would indicate whether Quakerism was thoroughly waked up to the importance of the contest. The state election was satisfactory to the Republicans, and jubilant mass meetings celebrated the event throughout the North. Mr. Whittier's relief from intense anxiety is shown in these verses predicting

the election of Lincoln in November. They were printed on a leaflet, headed "A Voice from John G. Whittier:" —

THE QUAKERS ARE OUT.

Not vainly we waited and counted the hours,
The buds of our hope have all burst into flowers.
No room for misgiving — no loop-hole of doubt, —
We 've heard from the Keystone! The Quakers are out.

The plot has exploded — we 've found out the trick;
The bribe goes a-begging; the fusion won't stick.
When the Wide-awake lanterns are shining about,
The rogues stay at home, and the true men are out!

The good State has broken the cords for her spun;
Her oil-springs and water won't fuse into one;
The Dutchman has seasoned with Freedom his krout,
And slow, late, but certain, the Quakers are out!

Give the flags to the winds! set the hills all aflame!
Make way for the man with the Patriarch's name!
Away with misgiving — away with all doubt,
For Lincoln goes in when the Quakers are out!

The news of Lincoln's election in November, 1860, was received by Mr. Whittier with devout thankfulness. He wrote to Lucy Larcom: "I agree with thee that 'hallelujah' is better than 'hurra!'"

During the winter the air was full of propositions offered by patriotic citizens with a view of propitiating the slave States, and preventing their threatened secession. Seward made two speeches of this nature, to which Sumner refers in a letter to Whittier, dated February 5, 1861: "I deplore Seward's speeches. The first he read to me, and I supplicated him not to make it. The true-hearted

here have been filled with grief and mortification. People are anxious to save our forts, to save our national capital; but I am more anxious far *to save our principles*, which leaders now propose to abandon, as Mr. Buchanan proposed to abandon Fort Sumter. The public pride arrested the latter; I hope the public conscience may arrest the former. My old saying is revived in my mind. *Backbone*, — this especially is needed here. If we are saved, it will be by events, and not by man. The inordinate demands of the slave States will make it next to impossible to appease them; even compromise cannot go so far. If they asked less we should be lost. Pray keep Massachusetts firm and strong. She must not touch a word of her personal liberty laws. The slightest act of surrender by her would be a signal for the abasement of the free States."

The following letter of Whittier's shows by its date that it was written while Sumner's was on its way to him. It is dated February 6, 1861: "If I recollect rightly, in a speech of thine some time ago, thee suggested the plan of compensation on the part of the general government for the emancipation of slaves in any State that might undertake to throw off the burden and curse of slavery. Am I right in the matter? Would it not be well, while calmly and firmly maintaining on our part the principles of freedom, to renew the offer, as a pledge and proof of our willingness to make great sacrifices in behalf of those of the slave States which are disposed to rid themselves of the dangers and guilt of slavery? It may be that the

offer would be rejected by all, but the moral effect of it would not be lost. It would show the slaveholders that we do not hate them, but slavery only. . . . For the sake of the *truly* Union men of the Border States, I would do anything short of abandonment of principles to extricate them from their unhappy position. They need our kindest regards and sympathy. I inclose a scrap from the 'Portland Transcript,' an extract from one of my brother Matthew F. Whittier's 'Ethan Spike' letters, which is a clever take-off and caricature of Southern secession."

In a letter written a few days earlier he expressed a willingness to pay for runaway slaves rather than catch them: "As to slave-rendition, the great body of our people can no more hunt slaves than commit cannibalism. We simply can't catch runaways; we may as well be honest and say so. But we are ready to pay for them, and that ought to satisfy anybody outside of South Carolina. . . . Tell our friend Wilson that if he speaks in defense of Massachusetts to make no apologies for us. What the old State has done is right. She has been loyal and kept her faith under severest provocation. As to John Brownism, a few individuals cannot make her responsible for their folly. Our good Governor Andrew made a blunder in the speech at the meeting, which, if he is not sorry for, thousands of his best friends are. He was elected governor not on account of that speech, but *in spite of it*, — on account of his great and deserved popularity, and the universal conviction of his integrity."

Mr. Whittier's sonnet "To William H. Seward" was written immediately after his speech in the Senate which was supposed to outline the policy of the incoming administration. This speech had not given entire satisfaction to the more radical wing of the anti-slavery party, and yet it was felt that it was as much as could properly be expected, considering all the difficulties of the situation. The poem was originally published in William Cullen Bryant's paper, the "New York Evening Post," early in February, 1861.

On the 1st of February, Mr. Whittier wrote to W. S. Thayer, Washington correspondent of the "New York Evening Post" (a son of his old friend, A. W. Thayer): "Tell Mr. Seward I have bound him to good behavior in my verse — and that if he yields the ground upon which the election was carried and consents to the further extension of slavery he will 'compromise' *me* as well as the country and himself. God give him strength and wisdom and moderation and firmness! If I were a 'righteous man' my prayers would be 'effectual' for him; at any rate they are 'fervent.' The South by their madness are assuming all the *responsibility* of whatever painful duty may be imposed upon the government. It may be the will of God that slavery shall perish through their folly and crime. If so, all the people will say Amen! I do not see any good to result from the 4th of February conclave. Ere that time, there is likely to be open war on the Gulf, and the whole matter put beyond the reach of committees and commissioners."

In response to an invitation to attend a mass meeting in Boston, in February, 1861, held to consider the political situation, Mr. Whittier wrote to F. H. Underwood: "My lines addressed to Governor Seward were intended to be *admonitory* as well as *commendatory*. I hoped to give him such a kindly hint that he could take it and profit by it, without offense or pride of opinion interfering to counteract it. But I begin to have serious fears that the new administration is entering, like its predecessors, in the downward path of 'compromise.' For myself, I would like to maintain the Union if it could be *the* Union of our fathers. But if it is to be in name only; if the sacrifices and concessions upon which it lives must all be made by the Free States to the Slave; if the peaceful victories of the ballot-box are to be turned into defeats by threats of secession; if rebellion and treason are to be encouraged into a standing menace, a power above law and Constitution, demanding perpetual sacrifice, I, for one, shall not lift a hand against its dissolution. As to fighting, in any event, to *force back* the seceders, I see no sense in it. Let them go on with their mad experiment, the government simply holding its own, and enforcing its revenue laws, until this whole matter can be fairly submitted to the people for their final adjudication. I have great doubts of the wisdom of sending commissioners to Washington, but I am well satisfied with the selection in our State."

This note to Lydia Maria Child was written on the 1st of April, 1861, and gives free expression to

his disgust at the efforts of certain clergymen and politicians to make more compromises to save the Union: "A thousand thanks for giving us that wonderful book 'Linda.' We have read it with the deepest interest. It ought to be circulated broadcast over the land. I laid it down with a deeper abhorrence than ever of the Fugitive Slave Law. Has thee seen Dr. Adams's new book? It is the foulest blasphemy ever put in type — but weak as it is wicked. Get it; it is a curiosity of devilish theology worth studying. — What is to be the end of this disunion turmoil? I cannot but hope that, in spite of the efforts of politicians and compromises, the Great Nuisance is to fall off from us; and we are to be a free people."

Mrs. Child relates this anecdote of Mr. Whittier, who with his sister paid her a visit in 1860: "Whittier complained of time wasted and strength exhausted by people who came to see him out of mere curiosity, or to put up with him to save a penny. His sister described some of these irruptions amusingly in her slow, Quakerly fashion. 'Thee has no idea,' she said, 'how much time Greenleaf spends trying to lose these people in the streets. Sometimes he comes home and says, "Well, sister, I had hard work to lose him, but I have lost him."' 'But I can never lose a *her*,' said Whittier; 'the women are more pertinacious than the men; don't thee find them so, Maria?' I told him I did. 'How does thee manage to get time to do anything?' said he. I told him I took care to live away from the railroad and kept a bulldog and a pitchfork, and I advised him to do the same."

Mrs. Child was no Quaker, but she had the spirit of one in her independence of the fashions in dress. Her bonnets were notably antique in style. On one occasion she called on Mr. Whittier at the house of a common friend in Boston. After her departure, he sat musing, and then soliloquized, "It must be so; I cannot be mistaken!" "What must be so?" queried his hostess. He continued, "Yes, I know I must be right — certainly I have made no mistake!" At length he exclaimed with a triumphant air, "Our friend, Mrs. Child, has a new bonnet!" The incident is characteristic; for Mr. Whittier was always observant of dress, and was in the habit of commenting upon it among his friends.

CHAPTER X.

IN WAR TIME.

1861–1865.

When the dreadful arbitrament of war could not be avoided, distressing as it must have been to one the habit of whose life was that of peaceful philanthropy, Whittier could not retire from the field, but gave frequent expression of his views in prose and verse. If he had written nothing else, his poems "In War Time" would make for him an imperishable monument. In his maturer years war had no such charm for his imagination as that to which he confessed in his earlier years, when he was conscious of a spirit "warring in his members" against the peaceful thoughts and ways of the Society of Friends, exciting in his blood a certain "joy of battle." He has given expression to the feeling in "The Training," included in his "Prose Works." [1]

The warlike tone of some of Mr. Whittier's earlier poems, such as that written on the occasion of the death of Bolivar, serves to show what lyrics might have been expected from his maturer years, had not his Quaker scruples in regard to war restrained his pen, and rendered even his intense love of freedom subservient to what he regarded as the

[1] Vol. i. pp. 346, 347.

Christian rule of life and practice. The only considerations that reconciled him to the civil war were its inevitability, and a trust, which was never shaken, that an omniscient mind took note of all its details and an all-powerful hand would control its results. In his poem "Italy," he has given expression to this confidence: —

> "God reigns, and let the earth rejoice!
> I bow before his sterner plan.
> Dumb are the organs of my choice;
> He speaks in battle's stormy voice,
> His praise is in the wrath of man!
>
> "Yet, surely as He lives, the day
> Of peace He promised shall be ours,
> To fold the flags of war, and lay
> Its sword and spear to rust away,
> And sow its ghastly fields with flowers!"

The consciences of the older members of the Society of Friends were sorely troubled when they found themselves in the midst of a war which they were powerless to avert, and the objects of which had so enlisted the sympathies and patriotic impulses of their sons that many of them were enlisting in the military service of the country. In this emergency it was felt that while they must bear testimony as a Society against war, yet they had duties as citizens to perform in behalf of their country, and in mitigation of the inevitable evils of the conflict. In June, 1861, Mr. Whittier was moved to issue a circular letter addressed "To Members of the Society of Friends," containing suggestions as to ways in which the philanthropy of the sect might properly find expression. In this circular, which was dated Amesbury, 18th 6th mo., 1861, he said, among other things: —

"We have no right to ask or expect an exemption from the chastisement which the Divine Providence is inflicting upon the nation. Steadily and faithfully maintaining our testimony against war, we owe it to the cause of truth, to show that exalted heroism and generous self-sacrifice are not incompatible with our pacific principles. Our mission is, at this time, to mitigate the sufferings of our countrymen, to visit and aid the sick and the wounded, to relieve the necessities of the widow and the orphan, and to practice economy for the sake of charity. Let the Quaker bonnet be seen by the side of the black hood of the Catholic Sister of Charity in the hospital ward. Let the same heroic devotion to duty which our brethren in Great Britain manifested in the Irish famine and pestilence be reproduced on this side of the water, in mitigating the horrors of war and its attendant calamities. What hinders us from holding up the hands of Dorothea Dix in her holy work of mercy at Washington? Our society is rich, and of those to whom much is given much will be required in this hour of proving and trial."

Throughout the war Mr. Whittier's pen was constantly urging that slavery was at the bottom of the trouble, and that there could be no durable peace until it was extirpated. He had a large correspondence with public men in this country and in England, and did not fail to urge this view of the case, at every opportunity. Before the first acts of war, his thought was to let the seceding States go in peace. In "A Word for the Hour," written in January, 1861, he said: —

"They break the links of Union: shall we light
The fires of hell to weld anew the chain
On that red anvil where each blow is pain?"

The poems written during the war appeared in the "Atlantic" and in the "New York Independent;" when he wished to reach the public ear promptly, and could not wait for the slower monthly, his poems were sent to the weekly paper, and they were at once copied over the whole North, giving such tone to public sentiment as no other series of poems had done in America. Even the poems that treated of peaceful themes had all of them the touch which shows they were written in the midst of war's alarms. The condition of his country is always present in his thought. Thus, the sweet poem "Amy Wentworth" is inscribed to William Bradford, the artist, in lines full of excuse for striking "milder keys" to "relieve the storm-stunned ear:" —

"I have not touched with warmer tints in vain,
If in this dark, sad year, it steals one thought from pain."

And in the inscription of "The Countess" to his old friend, Dr. Weld, he says: —

"To-day, when truth and falsehood speak their words
Through hot-lipped cannon and the teeth of swords,
Listening with quickened heart and ear intent
To each sharp clause of that stern argument,
I still can hear at times a softer note
Of the old pastoral music round me float,
While through the hot gleam of our civil strife
Looms the green mirage of a simpler life."

In "Mountain Pictures" and "Our River" are similar reminders that they were written when the war storm was shaking the solid hills, and that —

"Young eyes that last year smiled in ours
Now point the rifle barrel."

James T. Fields edited the "Atlantic Monthly" from 1862 to 1870, and all of Whittier's correspondence with that periodical, as well as the business connected with the publication of his books, was had with him during these important years, and their relations were without any intermission of friendliness and confidence so long as Fields lived. Whittier submitted his manuscripts to the criticism of his friend, and in many cases, as will be seen in the letters given in these volumes, made considerable changes in poems at his suggestion. His business letters to Fields all have friendly touches and references to political events, which indicate how closely they were in sympathy at many points, and how much Whittier enjoyed the comradeship of his publisher.

On the 20th of December, 1861, he returned to Fields a proof-sheet of his poem "Mountain Pictures," one passage of which originally read as follows: —

"Last night's thunder-gust
Roared not in vain: for where its lightnings thrust
Their tongues of fire, the great peaks seem so near,
Lapped clear of mist," etc.

Mr. Fields had evidently criticised the bold play of this imagery, and Whittier makes response: "See what it is to trust an author with his own proofs! I defer to thy judgment. I shrink from the feline suggestiveness of my figure of speech. The tongues of fire shall *burn* up the mist, and not *lap* it. For the rest, I hope the poem is none the

worse for the changes I have thought it best to make. How would it do to strike out these lines:

> "Tangling the dusky woods with silver gleams;
> And far below the dry lips of the streams
> Sing to the freshened meadow-lands again;

and substitute these: —

> "Making the dusk and silence of the woods
> Glad with the laughter of the chasing floods,
> And luminous with blown spray and silver gleams;
> While, in the vales below, the dry-lipped streams
> Sing to the freshened meadow-lands again.

"Our government needs more wisdom than it has thus far had credit for to sustain the national honor and avert a war with England. What a pity that Welles indorsed the act of Wilkes in his report. Why could n't we have been satisfied with the thing without making such a cackling over it? Apologies are cheap, and we could afford to make a very handsome one in this case. A war with England would ruin us. It is too monstrous to think of. May God in his mercy save us from it!"

In the "Atlantic" for December, 1861, there appeared one of Whittier's most characteristic poems, "A Legend of the Lake"; but the ballad was never included by the poet in any of the volumes made up from his contributions to the "Atlantic." The reason for the omission was this: A relative of the young man who was the hero of the ballad wrote to the poet seriously objecting to his telling the story, which was a true one; in the kindness of his heart he decided to suppress the poem, but in 1888 he was urged by his publishers and by

many friends to include it in the edition to be published that year. He gave his consent on condition that if any relative was living who still objected, it was to be omitted. There was a relative living who objected. As there can now be no good reason for suppressing the ballad, it is here given: —

A LEGEND OF THE LAKE

Should you go to Centre Harbor,
As haply you some time may,
Sailing up the Winnepesaukee
From the hills of Alton Bay, —

Into the heart of the highlands,
Into the north wind free,
Through the rising and vanishing islands,
Over the mountain sea, —

To the little hamlet lying
White in its mountain fold,
Asleep by the lake and dreaming
A dream that is never told, —

And in the Red Hill's shadow
Your pilgrim home you make,
Where the chambers open to sunrise,
The mountains, and the lake, —

If the pleasant picture wearies,
As the fairest sometimes will,
And the weight of the hills lies on you,
And the water is all too still, —

If in vain the peaks of Gunstock
Redden with sunrise fire,
And the sky and the purple mountains
And the sunset islands tire, —

If you turn from in-door thrumming
And the clatter of bowls without,
And the folly that goes on its travels
Bearing the city about, —

And the cares you left behind you
Come hunting along your track,
As Blue-Cap in German fable
Rode on the traveler's pack, —

Let me tell you a tender story
Of one who is now no more,
A tale to haunt like a spirit
The Winnepesaukee shore, —

Of one who was brave and gentle,
And strong for manly strife,
Riding with cheering and music
Into the tourney of life.

Faltering and failing midway
In the Tempter's subtle snare,
The chains of an evil habit
He bowed himself to bear.

Over his fresh young manhood
The bestial veil was flung, —
The curse of the wine of Circe,
The spell her weavers sung.

Yearly did hill and lakeside
Their summer idyls frame;
Alone in his darkened dwelling
He hid his face for shame.

The music of life's great marches
Sounded for him in vain;
The voices of human duty
Smote on his ear like pain.

In vain over island and water
The curtains of sunset swung;
In vain on the beautiful mountains
The pictures of God were hung.

The wretched years crept onward,
Each sadder than the last;
All the bloom of life fell from him,
All the freshness and greenness passed.

But deep in his heart forever
And unprofaned he kept
The love of his saintly mother,
Who in the graveyard slept.

His house had no pleasant pictures;
Its comfortless walls were bare:
But the riches of earth and ocean
Could not purchase his mother's chair.

The old chair, quaintly carven,
With oaken arms outspread,
Whereby, in the long gone twilights,
His childish prayers were said.

For thence in his long night watches,
By moon or starlight dim,
A face full of love and pity
And tenderness looked on him.

And oft, as the grieving presence
Sat in his mother's chair,
The groan of his self-upbraiding
Grew into wordless prayer.

At last, in the moonless midnight,
The summoning angel came,
Severe in his pity, touching
The house with fingers of flame.

The red light flashed from its windows
And flared from its sinking roof;
And baffled and awed before it
The villagers stood aloof.

They shrank from the falling rafters,
They turned from the furnace glare;
But its tenant cried, "God help me!
I must save my mother's chair."

Under the blazing portal,
Over the floor of fire,
He seemed, in the terrible splendor,
A martyr on his pyre.

In his face the mad flames smote him,
And stung him on either side;
But he clung to the sacred relic, —
By his mother's chair he died!

O mother, with human yearnings!
O saint, by the altar stairs!
Shall not the dear God give thee
The child of thy many prayers?

O Christ! by whom the loving,
Though erring, are forgiven,
Hast thou for him no refuge,
No quiet place in heaven?

Give palms to thy strong martyrs,
And crown thy saints with gold,
But let the mother welcome
Her lost one to thy fold!

The original reading of the next to the last stanza of "At Port Royal" was: —

"That close as sin and suffering joined,
We march to Fate abreast,
The dread avenger stalks behind
Oppressor and oppressed."

When he saw the proof-sheet he improved these lines, as follows: —

"That laws of changeless justice bind
Oppressor with oppressed;
And, close as sin and suffering joined,
We march to Fate abreast."

Early in 1862 he wrote to Fields, "Some time or other if I can get a day of health I hope to write something better than I have yet for the Magazine. It is in me, but, as Thersites says of the wit of Ajax, it lies as coldly as fire in flint. I would not mind suffering if I could but *do* something." The first

reference to "Andrew Rykman's Prayer" found in his correspondence is in a letter to Fields written in June, 1862: "I have by me a poem upon which I have bestowed much thought, and which I think is in some respects the best thing I have ever written. I will bring it or send it soon."

The abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia had from the first been considered by Mr. Whittier the most imperative duty of the nation. We have here his words of joy and thankfulness when the work was accomplished. In a letter to Sumner, April, 1862, he said: "Glory to God! Nothing but this hearty old Methodist response will express my joy at the passage of the bill for the abolition of slavery in the District, in the Senate of the United States. I hail it as the first of the 'peaceable fruits of righteousness' which are to follow the chastening of war, which now for the present 'seemeth grievous.' It is a great event, a mighty step in the right direction. I can now lift up my head without shame in the face of the world. I am thankful that Massachusetts was well represented in the Senate — that to her belongs so much of the honor of the noble achievement. All the friends of freedom congratulate thee and Wilson. Thank Wilson from me for his reply to Davis — and above all for his new movement to cut the claws and draw the teeth of the [dragon]. I have often wished to write thee and Wilson, but have feared to trouble you with any unnecessary correspondence. Believe me, I have watched your labors with interest and sympathy. . . . It is hard to be a mere looker-on at a time like this. But

such is my condition, I am not allowed to write — indeed I cannot without great suffering. But the good cause goes on, and I bless God that I am permitted to see it. It is getting to be plain with everybody that there can be no union with slavery — that we must be 'first pure' before we can be 'peaceable' men. . . . Since writing the above I see that the abolition bill has passed the House. I presume there is no doubt of the President's sanction."

"The Cry of a Lost Soul," written in 1862, so impressed the Emperor of Brazil that he translated it into Portuguese, and sent it copied in his own hand to Mr. Whittier, in token of the pleasure it had given him; the copy was accompanied by a well mounted pair of the birds which gave title to the poem; these were presented by his niece to the Society of Natural History.

He sent "Andrew Rykman" to Fields in November, 1862, and changes were suggested by his critical friend. On the 2d of December, he wrote, adhering to his imperfect rhyme: "I return Mr. Rykman. I know that 'pearl' and 'marl' do not jingle together well — but the lines have a meaning in them, and if the reader will roll his r's a little they will do. I add a verse at the tail of it. John de Labadie was a devout 'come-outer' in Holland two centuries ago. . . . Abraham's message is a great improvement in point of style. Its conclusion is really noble."

Early in 1863, when there was much distress in the manufacturing districts of England, on account of our civil war, which had cut off their supply of

cotton, and subscriptions for the relief of the sufferers were being raised in the manufacturing towns of New England, Mr. Whittier secured a contribution of $238 in Amesbury and Salisbury, and forwarded it to his friend, the eminent British orator and statesman, John Bright, with the following note, dated 24th 1st mo., 1863 : —

" I take pleasure in inclosing to thy care for the benefit of the unemployed people of your manufacturing districts, a bill of exchange on Tallmont, Brothers & Co., of London, for £32 14s 1d ($238 of our money), the sum contributed by the people of the villages of Amesbury and Salisbury for that purpose. I also inclose the proceedings of the meeting which originated the subscription. With a grateful appreciation of thy generous efforts to promote good feeling between the people of England and the United States, and of thy eloquent and truthful presentation of the great questions involved in our terrible arbitrament, I am very truly thy friend."

The resolutions of the Amesbury meeting were from the pen of Mr. Whittier.

John Bright acknowledged the benefaction in the following letter, dated London, February 27, 1863: " Thy letter has given me much pleasure. The contribution inclosed in it I have paid over to the secretary of the Lancashire relief fund in Manchester. Thy letter and the report of the meeting at Amesbury have been published in the Manchester ' Examiner and Times,' the most widely circulated paper in the north of England. I am sure the kindness towards our people indicated by

the contributions has given much pleasure in many quarters. . . . I have been a warm admirer and a constant reader of thy poems for many years, and I can imagine something of the deep interest which the great conflict must excite in thee. It seems as if a peaceable termination of the great evil of slavery was impossible — the blindness, the pride, and the passion of men made it impossible. War was and is the only way out of the desperate difficulty of your country, and fearful as is the path, it cannot be escaped. I only hope there may be virtue enough in the North, notwithstanding the terrible working of the poison of slavery, to throw off the coil, and to permit of a renovated and restored nation. . . . With us, we are witnessing a great change of opinion, or opinions hitherto silent are being expressed. In every town a great meeting is being held to discuss the 'American Question,' and the vote is almost everywhere unanimously in favor of the North. The rich and the titled may hate the Republic, but the *people* do not. . . . My daughter sometimes sends thee a newspaper with a report of some speech of mine. She is as much an American in sympathy as I am, and she wishes me to say how much pleasure she has derived from thy poems, and how much she hopes all thy noble words for freedom may soon bear fruit throughout your country. I await tidings from the States with anxiety — but I have faith in freedom and in good. With many thanks for thy kind note, and for the sympathy with our people manifested by the Amesbury contribution, believe me always thy sincere friend."

On the 6th of March, 1863, Whittier wrote to Fields: "I shall send in a day or two a ballad, 'La Comtesse' — the scene at 'The Rocks' on the Merrimac, which I am sure thee will like. I think it better by far than 'Amy Wentworth,' if I am a fit judge. . . . Holmes's lyric[1] in the last 'Atlantic' will be historical. In its way it is equal to the 'Hunt after the Captain,' which is great praise."

When, a little later, he sent "The Countess," it was accompanied by the following note: "I hope thee will like my pastoral little piece. I am sure Mrs. F. will. If thee see, on looking it over, that its simplicity crosses the border line, and becomes silliness, do me the favor to say so, and it shall go hard if I don't make it as dignified as Pope's 'Essay on Man,' or Dr. Johnson's 'Vanity of Human Wishes.'"

In his preface to "The Countess," as also in the text of the poem, Mr. Whittier falls into the error made by some other writers, when he says that Mary Ingalls died in less than one year after her marriage to Count Vipart. Miss Rebecca I. Davis, in her "Gleanings from the Valley of the Merrimac," having access to the diary kept by a prominent resident of East Haverhill in the first years of the present century, says she finds that the marriage occurred March 21, 1805. The Countess died January 5, 1807. Count Vipart, after the death of his wife, returned to Guadaloupe, where he married again, and where he died and was buried. His children were living in

[1] "*Choose you this Day whom ye will Serve.*"

Guadaloupe in 1877. But it is true, as the poem states, that his remains now rest in the family lot at Bordeaux, France, where the Viparts held a high rank in the nobility. The Count and his cousin, Joseph Rochemont de Poyen, came to this country and settled at Haverhill, at the time of the insurrection in Guadaloupe. Mr. Whittier's only brother married Abby, a daughter of Joseph Rochemont de Poyen.

The story which suggested to Mr. Whittier his ballad of "Barbara Frietchie" came to him from Mrs. Emma D. E. N. Southworth, of Georgetown, D. C., the well-known novelist, whose acquaintance he made while he was corresponding editor of the "National Era." On the 21st of July, 1863, she wrote to him the following note: "I send this little note out merely in quest of you. If it should find you, please let me know your exact address, as I have a message to deliver you. You need only put your address in the inclosed envelope. When I get it I will write to you."

As soon as she obtained the address she sent the following narrative, and the ballad founded upon it was written within a fortnight after its receipt in Amesbury: —

"'When Lee's army occupied Frederick, the only Union flag displayed in the city was held from an attic window by Mrs. Barbara Frietchie, a widow lady, aged ninety-seven years.' Such was the paragraph that went the round of the Washington papers last September. Some time afterwards, from friends who were in Frederick at the time, I heard the whole story. It was the story of

a woman's heroism, which, when heard, seemed as much to belong to you as a book picked up with your autograph on the fly leaf. So here it is: Barbara Frietchie was born in 1766; she was ten years old at the breaking out of the revolutionary war, and was fifteen years old at its close; therefore at the most susceptible period of her life she must have drawn in from that heroic epoch the ardent spirit of patriotism which inspired her act. When on the morning of the 6th of September, the advance of Lee's army, led by the formidable rebel general 'Stonewall' Jackson, entered Frederick, every Union flag was lowered, and the halliards cut; every store and every dwelling-house was closed; the inhabitants had retreated indoors; the streets were deserted, and, to quote the official report, 'the city wore a church-yard aspect.' But Mrs. Barbara Frietchie, taking one of the Union flags, went up to the top of her house, opened a garret window, and held it forth. The rebel army marched up the street, saw the flag; the order was given, 'Halt! Fire!' and a volley was discharged at the window from which it was displayed. The flag-staff was partly broken, so that the flag drooped; the old lady drew it in, broke off the fragment, and, taking the stump with the flag still attached to it in her hand, stretched herself as far out of the window as she could, held the stars and stripes at arm's length, waving over the rebels, and cried out in a voice of indignation and sorrow: 'Fire at this old head, then, boys; it is not more venerable than your flag.' They fired no more; they passed in silence and with

downcast looks ; and she secured the flag in its place, where it waved unmolested during the whole of the rebel occupation of the city. 'Stonewall' would not permit her to be troubled. The rebel army evacuated Frederick on the 11th, and our troops, under General Burnside, entered on the 12th. 'Then,' to quote the document again, 'flags of all sizes and from every conceivable place were displayed.' But as for the heroic old lady, she died a few days after; some thought she died of joy at the presence of the Union army, and some that she died of excitement and fatigue from the 'lionization' she received; for those who could not emulate the old lady's courage did honor to her act."

This is the whole story, as Mr. Whittier had it when he wrote the ballad. Of the substantial accuracy of the narrative many convincing proofs came to him, from time to time, in the midst of the animated and prolonged controversy the ballad elicited. He never felt responsible for the details, although his verses, it will be seen, follow quite closely the version sent by Mrs. Southworth, who says she obtained the story from Mr. C. S. Bramsburg, a neighbor of hers and a connection of Barbara's. When he told it to Mrs. Southworth and her son Richmond, her son suggested that it would be a grand subject for a poem by Whittier, and upon that hint the story was forwarded to him. On the 8th of September, 1863, Mr. Whittier wrote to Mrs. Southworth: "I heartily thank thee for thy kind letter and its inclosed message. It ought to have fallen into better hands, but I have just

written out a little ballad of 'Barbara Frietchie,' which will appear in the next 'Atlantic.' If it is good for anything thee deserve all the credit of it."

The poem was published in the "Atlantic" for October, and was immediately copied in most Northern papers. At the time when much was being said about the apocryphal nature of the stories upon which some of his ballads were founded, and particularly about the "Barbara Frietchie" legend, Mr. Whittier remarked, "That there was a Dame Frietchie in Frederick who loved the old flag is not disputed by any one. As for the rest I do not feel responsible. If there was no such occurrence, so much the worse for Frederick City." Afterward, in sportive vein, he referred to Betsey Prig's incredulity in regard to Mrs. Harris, and did n't see that Sairey Gamp was responsible for the non-existence of this creature of her imagination!

Mrs. Mary Quantrell, of Frederick, wrote to Mr. Whittier, claiming to be the real heroine of the ballad, and there cannot be much doubt of the fact that she also waved a Union flag when the rebel troops passed through the town. The evidence is sufficient, however, that there was a Barbara Frietchie, venerable in years, who either from her attic window, or from the sidewalk, showed her devotion for the old flag in a brave and uncompromising manner, and her name deserves the honor conferred upon it by the immortal ballad. The poem was sent to Mr. Fields, for the "Atlantic," in August, and the following letter indicates

the heartiness of the welcome it received. A new edition of Whittier's complete works was at that time in press. Mr. Fields's letter is dated August 24, 1863: "'Barbara' is most welcome, and I will find room for it in the October number, most certainly. A proof will be sent to you in a few days. You were right in thinking I should like it, for so I do, as I like few things in this world. The piece must go into your book, of course. We go to press at once with the new volume. Will there be any introductory piece? Inclosed is a check for fifty dollars, but Barbara's weight should be in gold."

To one of many friends who asked him if Barbara was a myth, he answered in a letter dated October 19, 1890: "I had a portrait of the good Lady Barbara from the saintly hand of Dorothea Dix, whose life is spent in works of love and duty, and a cane from Barbara's cottage, sent me by Dr. Steiner of the Maryland Senate. Whether she did all that my poem ascribed to her or not, she was a brave and true woman. I followed the account given me in a private letter and in the papers of the time."

The cane referred to above was brought to him in 1873, by Mr. Bramsburg, who accompanied Mrs. Southworth in a visit to Amesbury. It was made from a beam of Barbara's house, which was demolished soon after her death.

A writer in the "Century," [1] in an article upon this ballad, which denied that it had any foundation whatever in fact, made the remark that "the story will perhaps live, as Mr. Whittier has

[1] June, 1886.

boasted, until it gets beyond the reach of correction." To this Mr. Whittier replied in a note to the editor of the magazine, published Sept., 1886: —

"Those who know me will bear witness that I am not in the habit of boasting of anything whatever, least of all of congratulating myself upon a doubtful statement outliving the possibility of correction. I certainly made no 'boast' of the kind imputed to me. The poem of 'Barbara Frietchie' was written in good faith. The story was no invention of mine. It came to me from sources which I regarded as entirely reliable; it had been published in newspapers, and had gained public credence in Washington and Maryland before my poem was written. I had no reason to doubt its accuracy then, and I am still constrained to believe that it had foundation in fact. If I thought otherwise I should not hesitate to express it. I have no pride of authorship to interfere with my allegiance to truth."

The poems that deal directly with the war and its issues, like "Thy Will be Done," "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott," "To John C. Frémont," "Astræa at the Capitol," and "The Battle Autumn of 1862," would not allow the people to forget that slavery must die before peace could be restored. When the proclamation of freedom to the slaves of rebels in Missouri was made by General Frémont in August, 1861, and countermanded as premature by President Lincoln, Whittier gave a prompt expression of his opinion that the general had taken

> "counsel but of common sense
> To strike at cause as well as consequence."

Interesting incidents connected with this poem, showing how its strong words cheered the heart of Frémont at a critical time, are given in the following account of her first interview with Whittier, contributed to these pages by Mrs. Jessie Benton Frémont. She visited Amesbury in September, 1863 : —

Finding Amesbury easy of reach from Nahant, where we had a cottage, we went there one morning to visit Mr. Whittier, knowing I had that to tell him which would give him pleasure. The general was in New York just then, but my daughter and myself had as escort the dear friend in battle, as in exile, of Kossuth,— a fellow-Hungarian of generous soul who had again drawn his sword for his adopted country, Zagonyi.

When we asked for Mr. Whittier we were answered he had just gone out. We were sorry, and said so, adding we had come from Nahant purposely to see him. The ingenuous face of the blushing young girl told distinctly of the conflict between her obedience to directions and her regret at seeing us so disappointed. She hospitably asked if we would not rest after our walk up from the station, and as we sat in the cool parlor a splendid old parrot — the gray parrot, of Africa, with its scarlet head — began talking. I have always had a weakness for parrots, and had some of them at Nahant, and knowing *their* tricks and manners made acquaintance with this evidently objecting bird. As I supposed, this parrot had in its repertoire the usual sailor-Spanish-ship words

of instruction, and its funny surprise at hearing me use them, and hurried sidling-up for nearer talk, made us all laugh. The young girl told us it was not usually so friendly, that it had been her grandmother's pet, and was a dignified bird not given to answering laughs and chaffing. "Do wait a little," she said at last, "maybe Uncle has not gone *very* far;" and we waited, — to be rewarded by the return of the poet with his smiling niece Lizzie, who had evidently overcome his reluctance with difficulty, for his whole tall upright figure and serious look was in protest at being made to see strangers, when he was going off for quiet.

It is a risk to meet a favorite author — he may overthrow the ideal one must have formed — but we had no disappointment when we saw Mr. Whittier. Those luminous eyes! So direct, such unmixed a look of simple questioning inquiry, with no touch of self-consciousness, or offense given or taken, such lively refreshing absence of the usual conventional expressions toward a visitor, I had never seen except in very young children; it was the naked truth, habitual, and above all small disguises. Those eyes told of one "who had kept innocency all his days."

I began by telling him he had strongly influenced my young life; that I was but twenty-two when I cut from a newspaper and pasted in my prayer-book his "Angel of Patience"; that the lines

> "The throbs of wounded pride to still,
> And make our own our Father's will,"

were the hardest lines to get *by heart* I had ever

tried; for patience and submission were not natural growths in my part of the country.

"Thy speech *is* Southern; what is thy name?"

"Not yet," I said. "I am Southern; but let me tell you more first. I want to tell you of your last, your greatest, help to us both — to me, and greatest, to my husband."

And then I told him as briefly as I could how over thirty thousand men were next day to break camp for active pursuit of the enemy, — "the enemies of the Union, Mr. Whittier. It was Sunday evening; the setting sun lit up the October colors of the trees, and picked out the white of tents covering the many hills; the men were hushed into reverent stillness, for the bands played the air, and then voices, swelling to thousands on thousands, take up the familiar words: —

"'Before Jehovah's awful throne.'

Before that awful throne who could know how soon he must appear? And why? What good attained for which a man should lay down his life?

"The day's mail was brought into the general's tent. He had no heart to open it, for his highest, dearest, purest hopes had been flung back on him, and himself disapproved. But I, who was always the secretary and other-self, went on with the things of every day, 'taking the burden of life again,' and think of my reward when in the New York 'Evening Post' there met my eye your inspired, prophetic words.[1]

[1] The poem entitled *To John C. Frémont*, beginning

"Thy error, Frémont, simply was to act
A brave man's part, without the statesman's tact."

On the 2d of March, 1883, Mr. Whittier replied as follows to

"Uplifted beyond the time of trial, I went out with the paper to where, standing over the fire — as he so often had stood in lonely times of suffering and dejection — was the general, alone. I read him the whole. He was speechless with increasing, overwhelming, glorified feeling — transfigured. Taking the paper, and bending to read it, for himself, by the blazing logs, at length he said, —

"'He speaks for posterity. I *knew* I was right. I want these words on my tombstone: —

> "God has spoken through thee,
> *Irrevocable*, the mighty words *Be free!*"

Now I can die for what I have done.'"

Whittier had grasped my arm, and his eyes blazed. "What is thy name?"

"Frémont."

Without a word he swung out of the room, to return, infolding in his helping embrace a frail little woman, tenderly saying to the invalid he was bringing from her seclusion, —

"Elizabeth, this is Jessie Frémont — under our roof. Our mother would have been glad to see this day."

After this, we came down (with our hearts in

a request of Mrs. Frémont's for permission to publish the poem in the memoirs of her husband: "I was glad to see thy writing once more — and glad to know of thy wanting this recollection of thy time, so full of interest and wonderful events — and glad to comply with thy request to copy the lines addressed to thy husband, who struck the first brave blow for liberty. The years press heavily upon me, and the death of my brother, the last of our family, is a great loss. But I am thankful that I have lived to see slavery's end, the Union established, and the whole country in a prosperous condition."

our throats all the same) to every-day talk; but the every day of the war time was a sublimated life in itself, a grand epoch to have lived in, and taken part in.

Injustice roused Mr. Whittier's suppressed combativeness. Now, here before him, was the great injustice to the true feeling of the North, and to the patient, hopeless slaves; and to the fine young man who had made the Balaklava charge at Springfield. In Zagonyi he saw how the trust of foreign lovers of freedom had been used, then scorned. But he saw, too, beyond it all the inevitable fall of the girdled Upas-tree, and he knew that time at last sifts out the truth. And Truth *can* wait.

There was a convention of some kind in the town, and Whittier confessed he had escaped into his pear orchard when he saw us turning in at the gate. But for the gentle niece we should both have lost a treasured memory; *she* quickly separated us from the convention idea. We only left on the latest daylight train, and the following letter shows how Mr. Whittier, too, found it a day to remember. It was written October 24, 1863:

"It was very thoughtful on thy part to inform me of thy unexpected Hegira southward. I would [have been glad] to see thee and the general in your own quiet 'Anchorage,' but am not certain that I should have been well enough to do so. But I must thank thee heartily for thy little visit at our home. We have in some sort known and loved thee and thine for a long time, and seeing thee has confirmed our impressions. It was one

of the desires of our dear mother to see thee and thy husband. She spoke of you during her last short illness, and expressed the deepest regret at the result of the election [1856]. I am very happy to know that my word of encouragement was not wholly in vain, during your trials in Missouri. I sent the lines to thee at St. Louis, but thee was absent at the time, and perhaps did not receive them. The villagers have complained sadly because I did not let them know that Jessie Frémont was in the place. Our young men and women wanted to see Colonel Zagonyi, the hero of the Body Guard. When thee comes again we will have the bells rung and satisfy them. My sister joins me in grateful remembrance of your visit, and sends love to thee and thy daughter. My niece Lizzie sends love to Miss Lilly. Remember me kindly to the general. Would that he were at Washington, commander-in-chief. That God may bless you both abundantly is the sincere desire of thy friend."

From time to time we "passed the trail," but without that we knew it was "all 's well" with our friendship. Here in my Sunset Home his letter of introduction enabled me to know and make for his cousins a charming winter day among beautiful gardens and kindly welcomings. Mr. Whittier's note from Danvers, November 29, 1889, refers to them, and though the delicate handwriting has become enlarged to suit the failing sight, yet the quick flow of ideas is still his best: —

"I was glad to get thy kind letter. We were talking about thee and the general the day be-

fore. I suppose we felt the letter on its way, by what the Psychical Research Society calls telepathy. I am feeling the burden of many years, and am not able to read or write much, owing to failing sight. I do not know as it is any serious privation to lose the reading of newspapers, but to put books aside, and not be able to write to my friends, is another matter. My cousins desire to be kindly remembered to thee. They greatly enjoyed meeting you both when in Los Angeles. I fight over the Frémont campaign often. Memory recalls the stirring incidents of that memorable struggle, when thy own name was ever coupled with that of thy husband, and the cry of 'Frémont and Jessie' echoed over the entire North. God bless thy noble husband!"

I do not think Mr. Whittier would be unwilling for these letters to be published. They are like his written songs of inspiration, that led men to put highest thought into action, and bear all, for —

> "Not painlessly does God recast
> And mould anew a Nation."

And it is my abiding pride and honor to have shared with those who had to —

> "Wait beneath the furnace blast
> The pangs of transformation,"

and who rejoice with Whittier when he "felt the years press heavily upon him" — "but I am thankful that I have lived to see slavery's end, the Union established, and the whole country in a prosperous condition."

JESSIE BENTON FRÉMONT.

LOS ANGELES, April, 1893.

The following letter of Whittier's, written September 19, 1861, and refering to the Frémont proclamation, was addressed to his gallant friend, of the days of the Kansas struggle, Major George L. Stearns, the same to whose memory was addressed the tender tribute written on the occasion of his death in 1867, which contains this stanza: —

> "So the bed was sweet to die on
> Whence he saw the doors wide swung
> Against whose bolted iron
> The strength of his life was flung."

"I presume I should fully agree with you as to the duty and expediency of striking more directly at the real cause of the war. As heretofore, I shall use my endeavors to this end. If the present terrible struggle does not involve emancipation, partial or complete, it is at once the most wicked and the most ludicrous war ever waged. I hope the President has not undertaken to tie up the hands of Frémont. That would be worse for us than a score of Bull Runs."

Probably no other of Whittier's war hymns had such wide and immediate effect upon the popular mind as the one set to the music of Luther's hymn, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott," beginning with the lines: —

> "We wait beneath the furnace blast
> The pangs of transformation."

It was read in the Cabinet of the President, in every household in the North, and sung in the Union camps. John W. Hutchinson, with his family of singers, had been given permission by

Secretary Cameron, after the first battle of Bull Run, to sing to the soldiers encamped upon the Virginia side of the Potomac, and he ventured to introduce this hymn, which he called "The Furnace Blast." On one occasion he had an audience of two thousand soldiers, and as he sang Whittier's hymn with strong feeling, his whole soul wrapped in its sentiment, an intense stillness pervaded the house, until he came to the words: —

> "What whets the knife for the Union's life?
> Hark to the answer: Slavery!"

Then a solitary hiss was heard in a remote corner; there was instant commotion, and the soldiers were with difficulty restrained from summary dealing with the man who had expressed his disapprobation. This disturbance was reported to headquarters, and Mr. Hutchinson was brought before General Kearney, who ordered him to sing no more in the camps. General Franklin sent for copies of all the songs in the Hutchinson programme, and selected this hymn as incendiary. Later, an order came from General McClellan revoking the permit given the Hutchinson family to sing to the troops. Mr. Hutchinson returned to Washington, called on Secretary Chase, and told him the story. At his request, a copy of the prohibited song was given the Secretary, and he submitted it to the Cabinet at its next meeting. President Lincoln remarked that these "were just the songs he wanted his soldiers to hear," and gave the Hutchinsons permission to cross the Potomac again.

Lucy Larcom, then teaching in the Wheaton Female Seminary, at Norton, Mass., was planning a vacation excursion with friends to the Pemigewasset valley, and urged Mr. Whittier to join the party. He wrote, under date of June 17, 1863: "I want badly to go up to the hill country, for its own sake, and if thee and —— are there, that constitutes another very decided inducement. I am sure the trip would be pleasant and profitable to thee, even if I cannot be with you. So if thee can go, go it; 'if thou mayest be free, use it rather.' With the best disposition in the world to visit the Pemigewasset valley at this time, I fear I shall not be able to do so. I must go, then, in imagination only, and

> "'Shut my eyes in the lowlands
> To dream a dream of the hills,
> The sweep of a host of mountains,
> The flash of a hundred rills.'

I take it you are not expecting Stuart and his rebel scaramouches at your school. Think what a fluttering in your dovecote such a visit would occasion! I am half inclined to believe that the rascals will reach Philadelphia; and amidst all my anxieties and regrets, I cannot help smiling to think of the drab-colored panic among the staid and quiet people of that city!"

Again he wrote, in 1863: "God only knows whether we really deserve success in this terrible war. When I think of the rapacity of contractors and office-holders, and of the brutal and ferocious prejudice against the poor blacks, as evinced at Detroit and at Port Royal, I almost despair, so

far as we, the whites of the North, are concerned. God's will be done, whatever becomes of us!"

In September, 1863, after a pleasant visit to the Shoals, with the Whittiers, Lucy Larcom was suddenly called to the West on account of the death of a loved sister. Mr. Whittier wrote to her, under date of September 30: —

"We often thought of thee on thy sad journey to the West. As we walk down the autumnal slopes of life, how the shadows lengthen and deepen! But 'in the even time there shall be light.' 'Death,' said the heathen stoic, 'is according to Nature, and nothing is evil which is according to Nature,' and there is deep wisdom and consolation in his saying. But as Christians, our trust is not alone in the steady sequence of Nature, but in the tender heart of our Father, and the infinite love revealed in His human manifestation. . . . We are now having fine weather after weeks of cold and damp. On the whole, we have not had our usual proportion of sunshine this season. But glorious October will make amends. How the maple splendor will climb the hills of Campton! What hues will be mirrored in the Pemigewasset! In what a radiant transfiguration will Winnepesaukee indulge! I don't suppose I shall see them, but it is some satisfaction to know just how they will look. And there will be abundant beauty nearer home, and everywhere. It is a beautiful world — this of ours — a portent of the exceeding beauty yet to be revealed, I suppose. Let us be grateful, and happy as we can; holding fast our faith in the Eternal Goodness."

TO LUCY LARCOM.

12th mo., 1863.

How much we like thy "Loyal Woman's No!" It is grand in its indignant pride of patriotism. I see it is immensely popular — a proof that the people regard it as a "word in season." It has not the sweet rhythmic flow of "Hilary," a poem which anybody might be proud of, but it is stronger and deeper, freighted with meaning and passion. . . . It is a real disappointment to me that I cannot attend the grand Music Hall fair. But I 'm used to it, and am not going to complain or repine about it. The last summer and fall have enriched me with such sweet pictures and pleasant memories that I ought not to mention these winter inconveniences and detentions. Our Shoals expedition is a capital resource of fireside reverie. And then how much we have all to be thankful for in the improved condition of public affairs — the rising hopes of loyalty, the growing despair of treason — the President's firmness in standing fast by his Proclamation! We are living in a grand time; one year now is worth a dozen of the years of our ancestors. . . .

The "Hymn sung at Christmas by the Scholars of St. Helena's Island, S. C.," was written for Miss Charlotte Forten, a friend in whom Mr. Whittier had taken much interest while she was acquiring an education, and who in 1863 was teaching the freedmen on the island above named. Of Miss Forten (now Mrs. Grimké), Mr. Whittier said in a letter to Charles Sumner written in 1870, "She is

slightly colored; her grandfather, James Forten, of Philadelphia, was a friend of Rush and Franklin, served in the revolutionary war, and was a prisoner in the Jersey prison ship — a noble old man!" She gives the following account of the reception and singing of the hymn: —

"It was in 1863 that I was teaching there, and as Christmas was approaching, I asked Mr. Whittier if he would write a little hymn for our scholars to sing. So he very kindly sent it. I read it to the children, and showed them his picture, and told them about him; and they were much delighted, and proud to think the hymn was written especially for them. They learned it readily, and sang it with great spirit on that bright, beautiful Christmas Day, in the old church, amid grand, moss-draped live oaks. It was a scene I shall never forget."

Mr. Whittier's reply to Miss Forten's request for the poem was in these words: "I send herewith a little song for your Christmas festival. I was too ill to write anything else, but I could not resist the desire to comply with thy request. . . . Our old friend and former neighbor, Colonel T. W. Higginson, commands the 1st Regiment of South Carolina Volunteers. I hope thee will see and know him. He is a rare man, a gentleman, scholar, and true friend of the slave. Elizabeth, who is too ill to write to-day, sends her love. She says, 'Tell Charlotte I am so glad she is there. I wish I was able to be with her! Tell her to write often, and let me know all about her doings.' She sends a picture of her brother; she has none of her own —

very wrong of her not to have. Most sincerely, dear friend, do I rejoice at the good providence of God, which has permitted thee to act so directly for the poor, yet deeply interesting people of the Sea Islands."

Miss Forten wrote after meeting Colonel Higginson, and Mr. Whittier replied: "I am glad thee hast met Colonel Higginson, and to know him is to like him. He is a worthy coadjutor of General Saxton. I read General Saxton's Thanksgiving proclamation with the deepest emotion. It is the most touching and beautiful official paper I ever saw. God bless him! 'The bravest are the tenderest.' I am a peace man, but nevertheless I am rejoiced that the 1st Regiment of South Carolina Volunteers have behaved so bravely and manfully in the late expedition. Twenty such regiments, under twenty such men as Higginson and Dr. Rogers, would soon give a new aspect to the struggle. . . . Invalids as we are, sister and I long for the sun and air of summer. I send thee a volume of A. Crummell's.[1] Its author is a churchman and conservative, but his writings are a noble refutation of the charge of the black man's inferiority. They are model discourses, clear, classic, and chaste."

Again he wrote: "I think thee must have enjoyed thy visit to the Sea Islands exceedingly. I wish I could have been with you. We have had

[1] Rev. Alexander Crummell, D. D., born in New York about 1820, educated at the University of Cambridge, England, and author of several works, including *The Greatness of Christ, and Other Sermons*, which is the volume to which reference is made. Dr. Crummell was rector at St. Luke's, Washington, D. C.

a cold spring, and still the dreadful east winds blow, and sing their harsh discords among the apple blossoms. It is our [Quaker] Quarterly Meeting to-day, and our house is overrun with drab-colored people. I inclose a sprig of mayflower from our woods."

Mr. Whittier took a deep interest in the patriotic work of his friend, Thomas Starr King, in California, and sent him encouraging letters. Only Mr. King's part in the correspondence is available for these pages. Early in the war, Mr. Whittier remembered how his friend, in the days of the Kansas trouble, had given wings to his poem, "The Panorama," and sent him copies of the songs designed to keep up the heart of the North in the midst of the civil war. This passage occurs in a letter written by Mr. King early in the contest: "How awful the moral desolation of the war! Yet there is no retreat. We are half way over in a tide of blood. We return only to Sodom. We cross, and it is the promised land. . . . God accounts physical life cheap on the globe to the establishment of justice. Let us pray that we be not found utterly unworthy of His protection and blessing, and that our blood and treasure be not poured out in vain. The only way to get anything for what we have already paid of blood is to shed more. I rejoice to think that, if we conquer, the South is to be blessed more widely than the North. We are loving our enemies with our cannon, if they are battering down the bulwarks of the slavery Bastile. . . . Mrs. Neall was in our city some weeks ago, but could not stay to hear

the lecture. She writes me most delightful letters. It would raise the proof of life in our city, if she would come here. . . . And now, my noble friend, with great gratitude for your kindness, and honest pride that I can serve as a slight conductor of your power to our far Western Americans, I am ever yours."

The beautiful church built for Mr. King, in San Francisco, was dedicated to the worship of God in January, 1864, and soon afterward solemnly consecrated to the "holy cause of Freedom and Our Country." In anticipation of this patriotic dedication, Mr. King expressed a wish in December that he might have a hymn by Mr. Whittier to be sung on that occasion, but he did not venture to ask for it himself. Mrs. Hannah L. Neall, whose friendship for Mr. Whittier dated back to the days of his residence in Philadelphia, volunteered to make the request, and the hymn beginning, —

> "Amidst these glorious works of Thine,
> The vast Sierra's cloud-hung pine,
> And awful Shasta's icy shrine" —

was at once composed and forwarded to Mr. King, with a note expressing the fear of the poet, which was shared by his sister, that it might not prove to be adapted for music. Mr. King in his letter of thanks, dated January 1, 1864, did not share this doubt.

On the 28th of January, 1864, when he received his royalty upon the sales of his volume "In War Time," he wrote to Mr. Fields: "Thy favor, with remittance of $340, is received. It makes me rich

as Crœsus. I am like one who counting over his hoard finds it double what he expected. From a merely shoddy point of view the sum might seem small, but we did not cheat the government out of it — that 's some satisfaction. . . . I have just sent what I think is a hymn to T. S. King for the opening of his new steeple-house. It was kind and like thyself to tell me that my rhyme [" Barbara Frietchie "] found such approval. It is only when they are blamed or praised that we fully realize how much we love these bantlings of ours."

In March, 1864, Mr. Whittier was invited to visit the Army of the Potomac, in camp near Culpeper, Va. Brigadier-General Rice, in sending the invitation, wrote : " Your loyal verse has made us all your friends, lightening the wearisomeness of our march, brightening our lonely campfires, and cheering our hearts in battle, when ' the flags of war like storm-birds fly ! ' "

One of the neatest criticisms of Mr. Whittier's attitude during the civil war was made by Gail Hamilton, who worked for him a pair of slippers. On each slipper stood an American eagle, with vigilant eye, in belligerent attitude, ready for either defense or attack, with claws full of thunderbolts. The witty embroiderer had toned down the belligerence of the spirited birds by using that most peaceable of colors, the Quaker drab ! Mr. Whittier used to lend these slippers to his visitors, and call attention with a smile to the amusing insinuation they conveyed. He said the writer's needle was almost as sharp as her tongue or pen.

On one occasion during the war, he fell into con-

versation with a Quaker with whom he was well acquainted, upon a railway train in New Hampshire. His friend told him he was on his way to contract for a lot of oak timber which he had reason to suppose would be used in the construction of a ship of war at the Kittery navy yard, and he showed that the matter was worrying his conscience as a Friend, and hoped for some word from Mr. Whittier that would quiet the troublesome monitor. But Whittier saw that his friend had fully decided to supply the timber, and had a mind to tease him; so he argued against the transaction, and brought out with much force the inconsistency of a Friend's supplying timber for such a terrible weapon of war. Before they parted his friend began to show uneasiness about the matter, but was reassured as Mr. Whittier bade him farewell, by the remark, "My friend, if thee does furnish any of that timber thee spoke of, be sure that it is all sound!" That Quaker timber was in the stout ribs of the "Kearsarge," when she circled about the doomed "Alabama," off Cherbourg, in the most picturesque naval combat of modern times.

TO HARRIET M. PITMAN.

6th mo., 1864.

I intended when I left Providence to have written thee before this, but I found sister Elizabeth on my arrival home very ill indeed, and she has been so most of the time since. I am more discouraged than ever about her. . . . Another of the old landmarks of the past has been removed. My old schoolmaster, Joshua Coffin, died last week.

While he lived he served to connect me with my early boyhood, or rather childhood. I shall miss him. He lived at Newbury and often visited us. I found a letter of his awaiting me on my return from Yearly Meeting. Please tell Joseph and Gertrude I did not arrive home a moment too soon on my own and my sister's account. Dr. Bowditch has been down to see Lizzie; he did not speak discouragingly, nor in fact encouragingly, but hoped if she could take sufficient nourishment she would get the better of her trouble.

Whittier's old friend and schoolmaster, Joshua Coffin, usually remarkably bright-witted and merry-hearted, was in the last years of his life subject to fits of religious depression. He imagined he was predestined to be eternally lost, and did not rebel against the divine decree, but accepted it and fell into a mild melancholy, distressing to all friends who had known him not only as one of the happiest, but also one of the best of men — a philanthropist, who had shown his readiness to sacrifice even his life for the liberty and happiness of his fellow-men. Mr. Whittier, finding him in this mood at one time, asked him, "Joshua, don't thee hate God, who has doomed thee to everlasting torment?" "Why, no, it is for the good of all, that some are punished." "Joshua, thee has spent thy life doing good, and now thee is of course getting ready to do all the hurt thee can to thy fellow-men?" "No, indeed, my feelings have not changed in the least in this regard." "Thee is going to hell, then, in this mood?" "Why, yes, I

am reconciled to the will of God, and have no ill feelings toward Him or my race." "Now, Joshua, thee is going to hell with a heart full of love for everybody — what can the devil find for such an one as thee to do?" This struck the right chord. The good old man laughed merrily at the idea of the puzzle Satan would be in to find occupation for him, and resumed his old cheerfulness at once. When Mr. Coffin died, Mr. Whittier wrote this inscription for his tombstone: —

"Teacher and Christian, rest!
Thy threescore years and ten,
Thy work of tongue and pen,
May well abide the test
Of love to God and men!
Here let thy pupils pause, and let the slave
Smooth with free hands thy grave!"

The summer of 1864 was a sad one in the Whittier household, for Elizabeth was seriously ill. On the 30th of August, only four days before the death of his dearly loved sister, he wrote to Bayard Taylor: "How sorry I am that my sister's very feeble state of health compels me to say that I fear your otherwise most welcome visit must be postponed! For several months she has been confined in a dark room, in extreme pain and weakness. Nothing has given her more regret than her inability to see her friends — and for thee and thy Marie she would have the warmest welcome, were she able to bear the excitement. Fields will tell thee how sadly and heavily the bright summer has passed with me. . . . The Vadso church hangs in our sitting-room, and we value it highly as a memento of thy Northern travel. It gives me a good idea, I must think, of Arctic scenery."

The painful duty of announcing the death of his sister came to him on the 3d of September, 1864, and he wrote to Lucy Larcom: "Our dear Lizzie is no longer with us. She passed away this morning. Notwithstanding her great weakness, I find I was not prepared for the event. It is terrible — the great motive of life seems lost." Again he wrote, September 14: "We were friends before thee knew my dear sister; but now all who loved her, and whom she loved in turn, are nearer and dearer to me. I shall not be able to visit Manchester. The reaction from the anxious care and solicitude of the last few months I still feel. I feel it difficult even now to realize all I have lost. But I sorrow without repining, and with a feeling of calm submission to the Will which I am sure is best. If I can help it, I do not intend the old homestead to be gloomy and forbidding, through my selfish regrets. *She* would not have it so. She would wish it cheerful with the 'old familiar faces' of the friends whom she loved — and still loves. I hope thee and other friends will feel the same freedom to visit me as heretofore."

"The Vanishers" was the first poem written by Whittier after the death of his sister Elizabeth, and it was the poem which this sister's dearest friend, Lucy Larcom, chose to read at the memorial service held at the Whittier birthplace, soon after his death. This poem was sent to J. T. Fields, for insertion in the "Atlantic," in a letter dated Amesbury, 27th 9th mo., 1864: "I take the liberty of inclosing a little poem of mine

which has beguiled some weary hours. I hope thee will like it. How strange it seems not to read it to my sister! If thee have read Schoolcraft thee will remember what he says of the Puck-wud-jinnies, or 'Little Vanishers.'[1] The legend is very beautiful, and I hope I have done it justice in some sort."

In October, he wrote to Miss Larcom: "It is now four weeks since Lizzie left us. How much I have lived and thought in that time! . . . I want thee to feel that the old homestead door is always open to thee. I rode to Haverhill last week. It is very beautiful on the riverbanks now — not in their full glory yet, but giving splendid promise. The woods I find still have power to charm and soothe me. My health is better in some respects at the present time, but I cannot write. I busy myself with my garden, and the building of the new schoolhouse, as much as possible."

TO GRACE GREENWOOD.

10th mo., 1864.

My dear sister's illness was painful and most distressing, yet she was patient, loving, and cheerful even to the last. How much I miss her! how much less I have now to live for. But she is at

[1] See Schoolcraft's *History, Condition, and Prospects of the American Indians*, published by Wanza, Foot and Co., Rochester, 1851, pp. 122 and 123. The chapter on Indian mythology contains "The Legends of Iagou," by Mrs. E. Oakes Smith, in which reference is made to the Puck-wud-jinnies, — literally, "little men who vanish,"— who watched Chemanitou as he amused himself making various creatures, taking back the life he gave them, if they did not appear to be of so much use in the world and so attractive as the "Little Vanishers."

rest; surely, few needed it or deserved it more, if it were proper to speak of *desert* in that connection. A pure, generous, loving spirit was hers. I shall love all her friends better for her sake. The autumn woods are exceedingly beautiful at this time. I miss dear Elizabeth to enjoy them with me, but even now I realize the truth of Keats' line, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever," and I am thankful that I can still find peace in communion with outward nature in this season of glory and beauty. I wonder sometimes that I can be cheerful and attend to my daily duties, since life has lost so much of its object. But I have still many blessings, — kind friends and books, and the faith that God is good, and good only.

TO LUCY LARCOM.

11th mo., 29, 1864.

I trust thee will be pleased with the inclosed photograph [of Elizabeth]. It was taken ten years ago. Elizabeth did not think it good. She disliked the appearance of the dress or attitude, I think. It was a daguerreotype and makes a good photograph. To me, at least, it is invaluable. I rejoice in it exceedingly. I shall go to Boston the last of the week to be present at the electoral college next Third day. I have just written a prose story[1] for the "Young Folks."

Mr. Whittier's acquaintance with Lucy Larcom began during his residence in Lowell, in 1844. She was at that time employed in the mills, and

[1] *David Matson, the Lost Man.*

had developed a literary taste and capacity which had brought her into notice as one of the leading contributors to the "Lowell Offering," a magazine that was attracting much attention, not only in this country, but abroad, as a successful venture in literature by factory operatives. Mr. Whittier assisted and encouraged her, and interested his mother and sister in her behalf. She soon became the dearest friend of Elizabeth Whittier, and was a frequent visitor at the home in Amesbury, receiving the heartiest welcome from each member of the family. In a letter of Elizabeth's, among the papers of Mr. Whittier, is found this sentence: "It seems to me that a new grace has ripened in Lucy every time I see her." In the extracts from Mr. Whittier's letters, it will be seen that the fact of Elizabeth's dear love for her was a constant incentive to kind words and deeds in her behalf. All his life he was thoughtful for her welfare, and helped in every way in which he could render assistance. When Elizabeth passed away, it was Miss Larcom who solaced the heart of the bereaved brother by procuring the admirable portrait of her friend, which has ever since hung in the parlor at Amesbury, opposite the gracious portrait of the mother. These two pictures were to Mr. Whittier the dearest of his earthly possessions, in the long years of his separation from the saintly women they represented. If a fire threatened his dwelling, his first thought was to save these treasures. He wished, in case Miss Larcom survived him, that she should have the portrait of Elizabeth, but she declined to have it removed, preferring it

should remain in the room it had so long consecrated.

In a biographical sketch, which forms the introduction to the "Letters of Lydia Maria Child," Mr. Whittier has shown how her noble "Appeal" closed to her the doors of literary success which had previously been thrown wide open for her. His words are so fully applicable to his own case as to be worth quoting. Mrs. Child and he had both entered upon literary careers of great promise, when at the call of duty they gave up the popularity they had won, and encountered prejudice and hatred they might easily have avoided. Of Mrs. Child he says in this "Introduction," written in 1883: "It is quite impossible for any one of the present generation to imagine the popular surprise and indignation which the book called forth, or how entirely its author cut herself off from the favor and sympathy of a large number of those who had previously delighted to do her honor. Social and literary circles, which had been proud of her presence, closed their doors against her. The sale of her books, the subscriptions to her magazine, fell off to a ruinous extent. She knew all she was hazarding, and made the great sacrifice, prepared for all the consequences that followed. . . . It is not exaggeration to say that no man or woman of that period rendered more substantial service to the cause of freedom, or made such a great renunciation in doing it."

Every word of this generous tribute applies, as the reader will see, to the precisely similar case of him who wrote it. The warm, steady, and lasting

friendship that existed between Mrs. Child and Mr. Whittier is explained by this hard experience through which they both passed at the same time.

TO LYDIA MARIA CHILD.

15th, 11th mo., 1864.

Thy beautiful book[1] and kind letter reached me a few days ago, and my heart has been thanking thee ever since. It was an exceedingly happy thought of thine to send out these words of cheer to those of us who are beginning to pass down life's sunset declivities. I do not like, however, to have thee call thyself old. I never think of thee as such. Where the heart and fancy are still young, why should we recur to family registers? . . . I am thinking how much my sister would have liked thy book. How strange and terrible are these separations — this utter silence — this deep agony of mystery — this reaching out for the love which we feel must be ever living, but which gives us no sign! Ah, my friend! What is there for us but to hold faster and firmer our faith in the goodness of God? that all which He allots to us or our friends is for the best! — best for them, for us, for all. Let theology, and hate, and bigotry talk as they will, I for one will hold fast to this, God *is* good; He *is* our Father! He knows what love is, what our hearts, sore and bereaved, long for, and He will not leave us comfortless, for is He not Love? . . . What a glorious result is the late election! My heart has anticipated Governor Andrew's proclamation, and kept the Thanksgiving ever since. . . . I saw the

[1] *Looking toward Sunset.*

bust of Colonel Shaw that thee spoke to me of at the colored fair. It struck me as excellent. I am not, perhaps, a judge of such matters, but it seems to me it is a success. Give my love to thy husband. Let me congratulate him on the prospect of seeing the end of slavery, for which he has so long labored.

TO HARRIET McEWEN KIMBALL.

12th mo., 20, 1874.

Thy little book lies handy on my desk, and I love to turn to it. It is devotional without cant, pure without any lack of beauty and adornment. To me it is better than anything of Vaughan or Herbert, excepting a very few pieces of the latter. Thee ought to be very happy to have written so little and so well. . . . It has been my lot to see and hear of a great deal of misery among my married acquaintances and friends. As for bachelors and single sisters, they "die and make no sign" if they are miserable. . . . I have just received from Charles Sumner's sister the verde antique statuette of Hercules which used to stand on his centre table.

In the presidential campaign of 1864, the renomination of Lincoln did not at first receive the unanimous approval of his party. There was a large body of Republicans, particularly among the Germans of the West, and the more radical anti-slavery men at the East, who desired to support such a man as Frémont, who it was felt had been badly treated by the administration. The chair-

man of the Republican national committee, in this emergency, made a personal appeal to Frémont to stand aside, promising political preferment to his friends and the removal from office of his enemies. Frémont was not affected by appeals of this nature, but finally decided to give up his candidacy, a principal motive of this action being a message he received from Mr. Whittier, reference to which is made in the following extract from a letter written by Mrs. Frémont in November, 1889: —

"Among the words I remember from you are: 'There is a time to *do*, and a time to *stand aside*.' I never forgot your saying this to me at our Nahant cottage (in 1864), where you had come to say them to Mr. Frémont. Wendell Phillips, who saw the 'do' more clearly than the 'stand aside,' insisted I had dreamed your visit. 'Whittier goes nowhere — he *never* visits — his health does not let him,' and other laughing arguments against your wise and necessary view of what the time demanded of Mr. Frémont — to renounce self for the good of the greater number. Do you not remember it, too? It was a deciding word coming from you. And how we have outlived all of that time!"

As the demand for his books gradually increased, his publishers were induced to offer him a larger percentage on the sales, and Mr. Whittier wrote this note of thanks: "I gladly accept thy liberal offer, and only hope the public will make the arrangement one of mutual profit. At any rate, I should be sorry if I thought my gain would be at your expense as publishers. You have always dealt with me better than I deserved."

"The Mantle of St. John de Matha" was sent to Mr. Fields, in 1864, with the following note: "Is the inclosed a true ballad? I often sadly mistake about my pieces, but the feeling of this seems to be genuine, whatever the expression of it may be. I hope thee will like it, and that it may be thought worthy of a place in the New Year 'Atlantic.'"

When "The Changeling" was sent in 1865, Whittier wrote: "Some time I hope to be able to add a third volume, which will be a sort of history of the anti-slavery movement for the last thirty years. I send a poem which I hope is good. I am not sure; but I have bestowed some pains upon it, and it seems as near right as I can make it. . . . It is a great thing to live in these days. I am thankful for what I have lived to see and hear."

The poem "Laus Deo!" was suggested to Mr. Whittier as he sat in the Friends' meeting-house in Amesbury, and listened to the bells and the cannon which were proclaiming the passage of the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery, in 1865. It was the regular Fifth day meeting, and as the Friends sat in silence, their hearts responded to the joy that filled all the outside air: —

"It is done!
Clang of bell and roar of gun
Send the tidings up and down.
How the belfries rock and reel!
How the great guns, peal on peal,
Fling the joy from town to town!

"Let us kneel:
God's own voice is in that peal,
And this spot is holy ground.

> Lord, forgive us! What are we,
> That our eyes this glory see,
> That our ears have heard the sound?"

When he returned to his home, he recited these passages, which had not yet been committed to paper, to the family sitting in the "garden room." He had given thirty years of his life to bring about this event, and his whole heart went out in praise to God, who had

> "smitten with his thunder
> The iron walls asunder."

This poem was first published in the "Independent," of February 9, 1865, and it is referred to in a letter to Lucy Larcom, under date of 2d mo., 1865: "I am glad thee like my poem in the 'Independent.' It wrote itself, or rather sang itself, while the bells rang."

The following extract is from a letter to Robert C. Waterston, read at a meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society, called to pay a tribute to the memory of Edward Everett: —

"When I last met him as my colleague in the Electoral College of Massachusetts, his look of health and vigor seemed to promise us many years of his wisdom and usefulness. On greeting him, I felt impelled to express my admiration and grateful appreciation of his patriotic labors, but I shall never forget how readily he turned attention from himself to the great cause in which we had a common interest, and expressed his thankfulness to God that we had still a country to serve. To keep green the memory of such a man is at once a privilege and a duty. That stainless life of seventy

years is a priceless legacy. His hands were pure; the shadow of suspicion never fell on him. If he erred in his opinions, no selfish interest weighed in the scale of his judgment against the truth. As our thoughts follow him to his last quiet resting-place, we are sadly reminded of his own touching lines written many years ago at Florence. The name he has left behind is none the less 'pure' that instead of being a 'humble' one, as he then anticipated, it is on the lips of grateful millions, and written in ineffaceable letters on the record of his country's trial and triumph: —

> "'Yet not for me, when I shall fall asleep,
> Shall Santa Croce's lamps their vigils keep.
> Beyond the main, in Auburn's quiet shade,
> With those I loved and love my couch be made;
> Spring's pendent branches o'er the hillock wave,
> And morning's dewdrops glisten on my grave;
> While Heaven's great arch shall rise above my bed,
> When Santa Croce's crumbles on her dead;
> Unknown to erring or to suffering fame,
> So I may leave a pure though humble name!'"

In March, 1865, Mrs. Child sent him her three volumes on the "Progress of Religious Ideas;" it was at the time when there was some anxiety about Andrew Johnson's course as Vice-President, and Mr. Whittier referred to that and to the policy of reconstruction: "I do not know when I have been so pleased as when I opened the express package and found thy three volumes. We have them in our Library, but I did not own them, and I am more than glad to have them at hand for their own sake, as well as a memorial of our friendship. I hope to be able to send thee something of mine ere-

long. . . . I am more and more inclined to think we have got a strong man in Andrew Johnson; he has a good deal of the old Jackson strength of will. There is no fear that slavery is not to be utterly annihilated, and ground into powder under his heel. What I fear is that he is not quite democratic enough to give the black man the suffrage, or rather give his aid and influence in that direction. But the safety of the negro is in the fact, more and more apparent, that there is no possibility of a safe reconstruction of the States without his vote. This will be perceived; and we shall be compelled, as a matter of self-interest, to do justice to the loyal black man. . . . I am glad to know thy views about capital punishment. I almost feared that like some other of my friends the events of the last four years had changed thy views. I hope we shall have no unnecessary hanging to gratify an evil desire for revenge."

When the war was over, Mr. Whittier, as might be expected, took a lively interest in the questions growing out of the necessary readjustment of the affairs of the States which had made an unsuccessful attempt to secede. In June, 1865, a meeting was held in Faneuil Hall to consider plans for reconstruction. Mr. Whittier was one of the vice-presidents of this meeting, and was placed on the committee to prepare an address "to the people of the United States." Richard H. Dana, Jr., was chairman of this committee, and the other members were Theophilus Parsons, Charles G. Loring, Jacob M. Manning, Samuel G. Howe, George L. Stearns, and William Endicott, Jr. The address

published by them was a temperate and well-considered paper, demanding that the principle must be put beyond all question that the Republic "has a direct claim upon the allegiance of every citizen, from which no State can absolve him; that the system of slavery must be abolished by paramount and irreversible law; and that the systems of the States must be truly republican." In the preliminary statement of this address it is said that "in the arrangement with General Weitzel at Richmond, and in the Sherman-Johnston pacification, our government barely escaped a serious if not a fatal political defeat, at the hands of a vanquished enemy." The address was sent by Mr. Stearns to Mr. Whittier for his signature, and this was his reply, dated 3d 7th mo., 1865: —

"I have carefully looked over the 'Faneuil Hall Address,' and find it all I could wish. I can cheerfully sign it. I noted but one sentence which caused me any hesitation. I allude to that which speaks of Generals Weitzel and Sherman. I would prefer that no name should be mentioned in that connection. Our object is to persuade our fellow-citizens that in the matter of the Freedmen, justice and expediency, duty and interest, point in one direction. We should be careful, I think, to avoid giving offense to the friends and admirers of Sherman or any other popular general."

Mrs. Fields gives us a pleasant glimpse of Whittier as seen enjoying his summer vacation at the Isles of Shoals. He sits in the pretty parlor of Celia Thaxter's cottage, one of a group gathered about the hostess, as she sits painting on her dais by

the window. For some time he listens to the conversation about him, without taking part in it.

"The idleness of it palled upon him. It was Sunday, too, and he longed for something which would move us to higher levels. Suddenly he rose, and taking a volume of Emerson from the little library, he opened to one of the discourses, and handing it to Celia Thaxter, said, 'Read that aloud, will thee? I think we should all like to hear it.' After she ended, he took up the thread of the discourse, and talked long and earnestly upon the beauty and necessity of worship — a necessity consequent upon the nature of man, upon his own weakness, and his consciousness of the Divine Spirit within him. His whole heart was stirred, and he poured himself out towards us as if he longed, like the prophet of old, to breathe a new life into us. . . . I have never heard of Whittier's speaking in the meeting-house, although he was doubtless often moved to do so, but to us who heard him on that day he became more than ever a light to our feet."

CHAPTER XI.

"SNOW-BOUND," "THE TENT ON THE BEACH," AND "AMONG THE HILLS."

1865–1870.

"SNOW-BOUND" was written after two persons had passed away whom Mr. Whittier loved devotedly, — his mother and his sister. In one sense, the poem is a memorial of them, and as he could not dissociate them from his home life, the poem became a narrative of his early days in Haverhill. The first intimation of the poem is found in a note to Fields, dated August 28, 1865: "I am writing a poem, 'Snow-Bound, a Winter Idyl,' a homely picture of old New England homes. If I ever finish, I hope and trust it will be good." The manuscript of the poem was sent to Fields, October 3, 1865, with this letter: "I have thy note of this date. In answer I send 'Snow-Bound' to do with as seemeth best in thy sight. I shall see some things wrong when I get the proof, — as it is now I cannot do much more with it, owing to illness. I think thee will like some parts of the conclusion. The portrait of that strange pilgrim, Harriet Livermore, the erratic daughter of Judge Livermore of New Hampshire, who used to visit us, is as near the life as I can give it."

Mr. Fields, in returning the proof-sheets, made some suggestions, and Mr. Whittier wrote: "I thank thee for looking over my poem. I have acted as well as I could on thy hints, but I have left one 'bad rhyme,' *heard* and *word*, to preserve my well-known character in that respect. I don't know about the portrait. At first thought, it strikes me that it would be rather out of place at the head of a new venture in rhyme. I don't want to run the risk of being laughed at. However, do as thee likes about it. Put thyself in the place of Mrs. Grundy, and see if it will be safe for any 'counterfeit presentment' to brave the old lady's criticism. I think I have not injured the piece by my alterations, — that on the second page of the proof is rather improved than otherwise; and I have added two lines [1] to my slightly *lackadaisical* reference to the boys and girls, in road-breaking. Don't send the poem to me again. I shall tear it all to pieces with alterations, if thee do. In the picture of the old home, the rim of hemlocks, etc., at the foot of the high hill which rises abruptly to the left, is not seen. They would make a far better snow picture than the oaks which are in the view. Don't put the poem on tinted or fancy paper. Let it be white as the snow it tells of."

These are the changes made in the proof-sheets, returned in November, 1865: —

[1] These lines were: —

> "And reading in each missive tost
> The charm with Eden never lost."

1. I cannot alter the phrase "mindless wind" to suit me. Let it pass.

2. "They sat the clean-winged hearth about."

[Afterwards changed to "We sat," etc. Probably Mr. Fields called attention to the phrase for which "clean-winged" is substituted.]

3. "Dipped by the hungry, steaming hot."

[The line for which this is substituted does not appear in his letter.]

4. "Womanly atmosphere" must be allowed to pass.

5. "The woodchuck like a hermit gray
Peered from the doorway of his cell"

[is substituted for]

"The woodchuck in his robes of gray
Peered like a hermit from his cell."

6. "He played the old and simple games
Our modern boyhood scarcely names."

[In a subsequent revision this couplet is omitted, or enlarged as it now appears in the sketch of the schoolmaster. The poet finally decided to give the names of some of the games.]

7. "Or held the good dame's winding-yarn."

[We do not find the line for which this is substituted.]

8. "That none might lack, that bitter night."

[These alternatives are given :]

"That none might lack, on such a night."
"That none might lack, through such a night."

I prefer the original; it is better and clearer, in spite of the two *thats* — but take thy way. [Mr. Whittier's way was finally taken.]

9. I should alter the conclusion thus: —

> "Like the odors blown
> From unseen meadows newly mown,
> Or lilies floating in some pond,
> Wood-fringed, the wayside gaze beyond;
> The traveler feels the grateful sense
> Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,
> And, pausing, owns with forehead bare
> The benediction of the air."

[In the fifth line the word "feels" is changed to "owns," and in the seventh "takes" is substituted for "owns." Mr. Whittier adds:]

I am glad thee called my attention to the inclosed lines, for I think I have made a good change.

Again he writes: "I have been looking over the proof of 'Snow-Bound,' and I now quite agree with thee and Annie F., that the poem is (though I say it who should n't) good. If the public don't see it, so much the worse for the public. I have added three or four pages, perhaps, and will send it back whenever thee want it. I wish it could come out in season for winter fireside reading — the very season for it. . . . I shall dedicate it to my brother, and shall occupy one page with quotations from Cor. Agrippa, and from Emerson's 'Snow Storm.' . . . I like the page and type very much."

This letter about "Snow-Bound" was written to Lucy Larcom, October 9, 1865: "I wanted to answer thy last letter right off, and send my MS. of 'Snow-Bound,' but I was sick, and the poem was in fragments, and I did not like to send it in such a shape. I *have* sent it, however, to Fields,

and he likes it so much that he means to make a book of it, some time or other, with illustrations by Darley. It is a winter idyl — a picture of an old-fashioned farmer's fireside in winter — and if it were not mine I should call it pretty good. [Mr. Whittier had written thus far, when he was called away, and a month later he finished his letter as follows:] 10th 11th mo. So far I had written when I went to Boston, and met thee at Ticknor & Fields's. I have since received a line from thee at Hartford. . . . My little poem will *not* be illustrated — only a view of the old farmhouse in a snowstorm, copied from a photograph. When it will appear I cannot say. Would n't the dog days be a suitable season for it?"

On the 3d of November he wrote to Fields: "Is it too late to make a slight alteration in my poem? Near its close, on the 45th page, I think, the passage which reads thus: —

> "Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law, etc.,

I would like to change to

> "Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law,
> Haply the watchful young men saw
> Sweet doorway pictures, etc.

This will omit two lines. If the omission will be difficult, let the whole passage read as follows:

> "Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law,
> The fond constraint which none elude,
> Life's zest and pleased disquietude,
> Haply the watchful young men saw
> Sweet doorway pictures, etc.

If the change cannot be made,[1] don't trouble thyself to answer my note."

[1] The change was made; the two lines, whatever they may

Those who have editions of "Snow-Bound" printed before 1875 will find the phrase "Pindus-born Araxes," which has since been changed to "Pindus-born Aracthus," as in that year Mr. Whittier found that the similarity of names had misled him. It was the Aracthus he had in mind when the poem was written. Another error, more obvious, persistently held its place in the poem, through every successive edition, from 1866 to 1893: —

"The wedding *knell* and dirge of death."

It was written "wedding *bell*." Mr. Whittier's attention was called to it several years ago, and he said he would have it corrected in the next edition. It was corrected in the Artists' Edition, but in no other. He frequently received letters from teachers and students in schools where his poems were being critically studied. A school girl in a Western State wrote to say that there was a dispute in her class about a passage in "Snow-Bound." They did not see how the snow could form a Chinese roof over the well if there was a sweep. One of the class suggested there might be two wells, one covered with a roof and the other open; but as that seemed very improbable, the writer ventured to appeal to the poet for an explanation, and the tone of her letter indicated that she could not see any possible way out of the difficulty. Mr. Whittier replied that there was no roof over the curb; it was all open, except that on one side a board was laid over the curb, forming a shelf.

have been, were omitted, and the two here suggested were not used. It was a pity to throw them away.

The snow was sometimes piled upon this shelf in fantastic shapes, giving the idea of a Chinese roof.

"Painful Sewel's ancient tome," mentioned in the sketch of his mother, is the "History of the Christian People called Quakers," by William Sewel, a Dutchman. The name is not correctly spelled except in late editions of "Snow-Bound." Sewel was born in Amsterdam and was of English extraction. He died about 1725, having spent twenty-five years of his old age in collecting the materials for his history. It was originally written in Low Dutch, and was translated into English by Sewel himself, who dedicated his work to George I. It is devoted mostly to the story of the persecutions of the Friends in Great Britain and in America. Many instances are related of swift retribution that came upon the persecutors of the Quakers. An American edition was published in Philadelphia in 1823, in two volumes of about six hundred pages each, and it was this edition which was in the library of Mr. Whittier's father, and was referred to in the poem.

While at Sturtivant's Farm, in the summer of 1888, Mrs. Anthony, of Providence, showed Mr. Whittier a copy of the first edition of "Snow-Bound." He took the book, and wrote these lines on a fly-leaf: —

> "Twenty years have taken flight
> Since these pages saw the light.
> All home-loves are gone;
> But not all with sadness still
> Do the eyes of memory fill
> As I gaze thereon.

"Lone and weary life seemed, when
First these pictures of the pen
Grew upon my page,
But I still have loving friends,
And the peace our Father sends
Cheers the heart of age."

Mr. Whittier's share in the profits of the first issue of "Snow-Bound" amounted to ten thousand dollars, a success which greatly surprised him; but there was always mingled with the surprise and pleasure of the competence that had come to him so unexpectedly, the regret that his mother and sister had passed away without enjoying the added comforts and luxuries it was now in his power to supply. Besides the great break in his home which seems immediately to have given rise to this poem, the close of the long period of struggle with the slave power undoubtedly affected him by giving a rebound to the more peaceful movements of his nature. The years from 1832 to 1865 had been the years of his greatest mental activity. Besides his extensive correspondence and prose writings, he wrote during this period nearly three hundred poems, more than a third of which bore directly or indirectly upon the subject of slavery.

Some other American poets, even those who had written bravely against the system of slavery, consented to leave out of their collected works such poems as would be offensive to their Southern readers. Whittier never made this concession to popular prejudice, and issued no edition of his works that did not present him as an uncompromising foe of slavery. But it was easy to see that

his enmity to the institution did not extend to individual slaveholders. All his life he numbered among his personal friends not only apologists for slavery, but slaveholders themselves. In replying to the charge of a Southern paper that he was an enemy of the South, he once wrote to a friend: — "I was never an enemy to the South or the holders of slaves. I inherited from my Quaker ancestry hatred of slavery, but not of slaveholders. To every call of suffering or distress in the South I have promptly responded to the extent of my ability. I was one of the very first to recognize the rare gift of the Carolinian poet Timrod, and I was the intimate friend of the lamented Paul H. Hayne, though both wrote fiery lyrics against the North. I am sure no one rejoices more heartily than I do at the prosperity of the Southern States."

TO LUCY LARCOM.

1st mo., 27, 1866.

My book, I think, will be out in a month or so, and I am busy with proof. Elizabeth's picture came safely last night, and I am happy in its possession. I cannot tell thee how glad I am, nor how deeply I appreciate the delicate kindness of the gift. I shall never see it without a grateful recognition of the giver. The more I look at it, the more striking seems the likeness. It seems to me that it could not be better; pray tell the artist how well satisfied I am. Apart from the likeness, it is really a fine work of art. It gives Elizabeth's best expression, such as I so often have seen, when she was comparatively well and happy.

The above letter refers to the crayon portrait of Whittier's sister Elizabeth, that has ever since hung in the Amesbury parlor, opposite that of his mother. It was a present from Lucy Larcom. These portraits Whittier considered of the greatest value. "If the house is on fire, save these first," he said.

TO THE SAME.

2d mo., 7, 1866.

I may be in Boston erelong; but it is too cold now to leave home. See all the pretty things thee can in Boston — go to the picture shops — peep in at all the gay windows, and make the most of thy opportunity. I always do, and should like to be there and help thee.

TO THE SAME.

25th 3d mo., 1866.

Believe me, Lucy Larcom, it gives me real sorrow
That I cannot take my carpet-bag and go to town to-morrow;
But I 'm "snow-bound," and cold on cold like layers of an onion
Have piled my back and weighed me down as with the pack of Bunyan.
The northeast wind is damper and the northwest wind is colder,
Or else the matter simply is that I am growing older.
And then I dare not trust a moon seen over one's left shoulder,
As I saw this with slender horns caught in a west hill pine,
As on a Stamboul minaret curves the arch-impostor's sign, —
So I must stay in Amesbury, and let you go your way,
And guess what colors greet your eyes, what shapes your steps delay;
What pictured forms of heathen lore, of god and goddess please you,
What idol graven images you bend your wicked knees to.
But why should I of evil dream, well knowing at your head goes
That flower of Christian womanhood, our dear good Anna Meadows.[1]

[1] Mrs. Fields.

She 'll be discreet, I 'm sure, although once in a freak romantic
She flung the Doge's bridal ring and married "The Atlantic."
And, spite of all appearances, like the woman in a shoe
She 's got so many "Young Folks" [1] now, she don't know what to do.
But I must say I think it strange that thee and Mrs. Spaulding,
Whose lives with Calvin's five-railed creed have been so tightly walled in,
Should quit your Puritan homes, and take the pains to go
So far, with malice aforethought, to "walk in a vain show!"
Did Emmons hunt for pictures? Was Jonathan Edwards peeping
Into the chambers of imagery with maids for Thormuz weeping?
Ah well! the times are sadly changed, and I myself am feeling
The wicked world my Quaker coat from off my shoulders peeling.
God grant that in the strange new sea of change wherein we swim,
We still may keep the good old plank, of simple faith in Him!

The following letter to his friend, Margaret Burleigh, was written before the full success of "Snow-Bound" had become evident: —

AMESBURY, 14th 7th mo., 1866.

I thank thee for thy kind note of congratulation upon my supposed riches. I only wish I could make out a better case for it. I *have* been favored more than I ever dreamed of, however. "Snow-Bound" has given or will give me about $2000, and my little speculation of $300 has given me $1200. This, with what I had before, enables me to meet the extra expenses of living in these times, and to send my niece to Ipswich Seminary, leaving me about $100 a year for charities, but with nothing for superfluities. So that I am satisfied — more would only be burdensome, as it is now too late for me to make a display with money, or at-

[1] *Our Young Folks*, as well as the *Atlantic*, was published by Fields, Osgood & Co., and Miss Larcom was editing the juvenile magazine.

tempt a fast life. When it pleases the Lord to call me, I shall leave little to quarrel about among my relatives. If my health allowed me to write I could make money easily now, as my anti-slavery reputation does not injure me in the least, at the present time. For twenty years I was shut out from the favor of booksellers and magazine editors, but I was enabled by rigid economy to live in spite of them — and to see the end of the infernal institution which proscribed me. Thank God for it.

In the three years that had elapsed since the publication of the last collection of Whittier's poems, "In War Time," he had written several popular ballads which he was prepared to string together upon the light thread of a summer story, adding some hitherto unpublished poems, with the title of "The Tent on the Beach." He was delayed by ill health, and to an inquiry from Fields as to the progress he had made, he replied, August 18, 1866: "The 'Tent on the Beach' is not pitched yet — nay more, the very cloth of it is not woven. All this summer I have been utterly unable to do anything of the kind; and I sometimes fear I shall have to give it up altogether. It is out of the question for this season. I am *so* sorry, for I meant to have made it better than 'Snow-Bound.' It is rather a hard dispensation of Providence, but I dare say it is all for the best — there is, sooner or later, an end of all things — even of bad poetry. It is beautiful weather now — such as used to make me stronger — but somehow it does not have its old-time effect."

On the 30th of September, 1866, he inclosed his poem "Our Master," with this note, to Mr. Fields: "I inclose for Annie Fields a poem of mine which has never seen the light. It presents my view of Christ as the special manifestation of the Love of God to humanity. . . . Let me thank the publishers of 'Milton's Prose,' for the great compliment of the dedication. Milton's prose has long been my favorite reading. My whole life has felt the influence of his writings. . . . I fear I can make no promise of the prose story thee ask for. I am forbidden to use my poor head at present — so I have to get along as I can without it. St. Leon, thee knows, walked about as usual after his head was cut off."

A two-volume edition of his prose works was published in 1866. The reference is to this in the following note, dated October 30, 1866: "The prose volumes are admirable — too good, I fear. Nobody, I am afraid, will buy them; but it is a satisfaction to see one's thoughts so nicely dressed up, at any rate. . . . Am glad to see 'Hosea Biglow' in book form. It is a great book — the best of its kind for the last half century or more. It has wit enough to make the reputation of a dozen modern English satirists."

His next letter to Fields about the "Tent" was written December 28, and was sent with the copy of his completed work: "I send thee the MS. of the 'Tent on the Beach' — too badly written to read, I fear. If it ever gets into type it will seem better than in its present state. Tell me candidly if thee object to the *personal* charac-

ter of it. I have represented thee, Bayard Taylor, and myself, living a wild tent life for a few summer days on the beach, where for lack of something better I read my stories to [you]. My original plan was the old Decameron one — each person to read his own poems; but the thing has been so hackneyed by repetition that I abandoned it in disgust, and began anew. The result is before thee. Put it in type or on the fire, I am content, like Eugene Aram, 'prepared for either fortune.' Thee must get some of thy clerks to fish up the ballads, which are all in the 'Atlantic,' and see how the thing looks with them. The scene of the poem is Salisbury Beach as it was half a dozen years ago. I am sorry to send so bad a copy, but my head will not allow me to re-write it. When it gets in type, if it ever does, we shall see what it looks like. It is too short, but I am not disposed to make it longer. With the poems to be added it will make almost a book by itself."

Fields at once reported his satisfaction with the work, and Whittier wrote, January 2, 1867: "I am delighted to know that thee do not take in dudgeon my free use of thee; and I am glad thee like the poem as a whole. I shall make it better if I can get it in type. It is better than 'Snow-Bound' now. . . . I inclose a fragment which I like. It goes in after 'Kallundborg Church.'"

Fields desired immediate publication, and Whittier wrote, January 6: "I am rather surprised by the announcement that the 'Tent' must be pitched in midwinter; but it may be best, and I shall be glad to have it done and off my mind.

. . . I am in doubt about the 'Peace Autumn,' compared with the 'Battle Autumn.' It is hardly up to the mark."

On the 1st of February, he wrote: "I am glad to know that the 'Tent' is set up. Bayard Taylor sails for Europe on the 9th. I wish it were possible for thee to send him the sheets of the 'Tent' before he leaves. Do so, if it can be done without too much trouble."

On the same day he had written to Taylor: "I must ask Fields to send thee the proof-sheets of 'The Tent on the Beach'; and I here beg pardon for the friendly license of using thee as one of the imaginary trio on the seashore. I hope neither thee nor Marie will think I have got thee into bad company. And now, dear friend, dear to me, not on my own account alone, but on that of my dear mother and sister, who loved thee so well, may God bless and keep thee and thine during your European sojourn, and bring you safe back to the quiet of Cedarcroft. . . . Thy 'St. John' is a poem for poets and painters."

The song referred to by Whittier in the following note to Fields was "The Worship of Nature," a poem[1] which had been lying in his portfolio for several years: "I send thee a song to be inserted in the place I have indicated in the proof-sheet, as a substitute for the verse commencing 'The tent was still,' etc. Of course, it will delay your

[1] The germ of this poem is to be found in verses with the same title, "The Worship of Nature," written by Whittier while in his teens, which were published in the Haverhill *Gazette*, Oct. 5, 1827.

printer and be a bother to you; but it is good, though I say it who should n't, and it must not be lost. For the future all will go on smoothly. I have bridged over the *shaky* place in the poem, and shall make no more serious alterations or additions. I hope thee will like the song as well as I do."

On the next day he wrote: "I see little to amend or alter. I see no great harm in two words so common and insignificant as 'well' in the same verse. Let them slide. I sent yesterday something of an addition. If it is not best in thy opinion, omit it — that is to say, the song — and in the proof I can make the by-talk all right. But I rather liked it, though I have no definite idea of it. I shall not meddle further with the poem, and the proofs will come back without much change for the future."

To an inquiry about "The Maids of Attitash," he replied: "It is At-ti-tash — Indian name for huckleberry — the name of a pond or lake in Amesbury, which sometime I would be glad to show thee, as it is pretty as St. Mary's lake, which Wordsworth sings, — in fact a great deal prettier. The glimpse of the Pawtuckaway range of mountains in Nottingham seen across it is very fine, and it has noble groves of pines and maples and ash-trees. I hope thee will have no further trouble with the poem. I am greatly obliged for thy suggestions always."

On another occasion he wrote: "See what thy good nature in sending me a proof has come to. I yield the rhyme of *martyr* and *water* to please

thee; but reluctantly, for it is no time now to give up our Yankee rights of pronunciation. I should be hung for my bad rhymes anywhere south of Mason and Dixon's line. My 'speech bewrayeth me.' . . . I have added a verse. You can crowd it into the page without disturbing your other pieces."

The four lines which follow the song beginning, "Her window opens to the bay," were an afterthought, and were added in the proof, as follows:

> "The sweet voice into silence went,
> A silence which was almost pain,
> As through it rolled the long lament,
> The cadence of the mournful main."

Instances of alliteration are of frequent occurrence in Whittier's writings. The principal of a Boston school once wrote to him inquiring if the alliterations in "The Wreck of Rivermouth" were made purposely, or unintentionally and spontaneously. This was his answer: "I am glad to be able to tell thee that I never, in that, or any other poem, consciously sought alliteration, and indeed was not aware of it in 'The Wreck of Rivermouth,' until my attention was called to it by thy letter."

The sweet and tender lines entitled "The Friend's Burial," which were written in 1873, allude to the funeral of his aged friend, Elizabeth Gove, of Seabrook, N. H.

The story of "The Dead Ship of Harpswell" came to Mr. Whittier from Miss Marion Pearl (now Mrs. Charles Sellmer), who then resided in the vicinity of the scene of the legend. A pun-

ning reference to her name is made in the introduction to the ballad, in "The Tent on the Beach": —

> "Here, . . .
> Is something I found last year
> Down on the island known as Orr's.
> I had it from a fair-haired girl
> Who, oddly, bore the name of Pearl,
> (As if by some droll freak of circumstance,)
> Classic, or well-nigh so, in Harriet Stowe's romance."

Invited by Fields to pay him a visit at about the time the book was published, he replied: "Solitude as such has few charms for me. But I am and have been for many days unfit and unable to make any change. A miserable, inexorable headache engrosses me. I am a bundle of nerves for Pain to experiment upon, and I can think of nothing else until this subsides. I may as well be here as anywhere, since I should be neither useful nor ornamental, and I love my friends too well to inflict something which is not myself upon them."

To a note of Lucy Larcom's, commending "The Tent on the Beach," he replied: "Thanks for what thee say of my new book; but it don't convince me. I have had, and still have, misgivings about it. It never would have been written but for its premature announcement. I don't mean to be betrayed into a book again. As Emerson says, 'It is time to be old,' and thee knows that I have been 'venerable' for a long time; at any rate, I ought to have one of the privileges of age, exemption from labor and the 'making of books of which there is no end.' I wrote this, or dictated it, under

great disadvantages, and shall not blame the critics if they make a note of it."

On the 18th of February, he wrote to Fields: "The 'Tent' looks well; I like thy part of it. Mine, I see, needs some corrections and emendations. But if, as the 'Transcript' says, you have been foolish enough to print ten thousand copies, there will never be a chance for that. It will never come to a second edition. I hope there is some mistake about it; I should not like to see your shelves loaded down with unsold verses."

The event proved that there was no occasion for anxiety; for twenty thousand copies of the book were speedily sold, being called for at the rate of one thousand a day. On the 28th of February, Mr. Whittier wrote: "I got thy note last evening. Think of bagging in this 'tent' of ours an unsuspecting public at the rate of a thousand a day! This will never do. The swindle is awful. Barnum is a saint to us. I am bowed with a sense of guilt, ashamed to look an honest man in the face. But Nemesis is on our track; somebody will puncture our 'tent' yet, and it will collapse like a torn balloon. I know I shall have to catch it; my back tingles in anticipation. If a promise of never doing such a thing again would avail, I am more than ready to make it. . . . I thank thee for H. W. L.'s note, and thank him for his kind word and invitation. I would accept the last if I were in a bodily condition to do it."

Mr. E. L. Godkin, editor of the "Nation,"

having quoted the passage in "The Tent on the Beach," in which Mr. Whittier referred to his editorial work, as indicating that he had a low estimate of his work in journalism,[1] the poet wrote as follows to Mr. Godkin: —

"In the half playful lines, if I did not feel at liberty to boast of my anti-slavery labors and to magnify my editorial profession, I certainly did not mean to underrate them or to express the shadow of a regret that they had occupied so large a share of my time and thought. The simple fact is that I cannot be sufficiently grateful to the Divine Providence that so early called my attention to the great interests of humanity, saving me from the poor ambitions and miserable jealousies of a selfish pursuit of literary reputation. Up to a comparatively recent period my writings have been simply episodical, something apart from the real object and aim of my life; and whatever favor they have found with the public has come to me as a grateful surprise rather than as an expected reward. As I have never staked all on the chances of authorship I have been spared the pain of disappointment and the temptation to envy those who, as men of letters, occupy a higher place in the public estimation than I have ever aspired to."

[1] "And one there was, a dreamer born,
Who, with a mission to fulfill,
Had left the Muses' haunts to turn
The crank of an opinion-mill,
Making his rustic reed of song
A weapon in the war with wrong."

BAYARD TAYLOR TO J. G. WHITTIER.

GOTHA, March 19, 1867.

Here in my German home, I take a leisure evening to tell how much I value the introduction into such a sedate company as are gathered together in the tent by the seaside. Of course, there was no difficulty in recognizing my companions. If my picture be drawn with an over-kindly and affectionate pencil, I would not change it if I could. The words which came to me like a "God-speed!" at parting still echo in my heart. It is a pleasant thought that our names should be thus connected, if only to prove to the world that there *may* be faithful friendship between poets. The surprise and delight made me happy for many days. . . . Marie and I spent a day and a half with Tennyson. He gave us a cordial welcome, and in the evening read to us his "Guinevere." He had Whittier, in blue and gold, on his writing-desk, and asked me a great many questions about the poet, which I was glad to answer. It seems that the success of "Snow-Bound" in England has recalled attention to your other poems. While I was in London, I was more than once asked where they could be had. My friend Graham sent a number of copies to English and Scotch authors.

One of the miscellaneous poems published in the volume with "The Tent on the Beach" was "The Common Question," which was suggested by the talk of Mr. Whittier's pet parrot, "Charlie." In a letter to Lucy Larcom, dated 2d mo., 7, 1866, he sends the poem, with the title of "The Bird's

Question," for insertion in "Our Young Folks,"[1] with the following explanation: "I have met with a real loss — poor Charlie is dead. He has gone where the good parrots go. He has been ailing and silent for some time, and he finally died. Don't laugh at me — but I am sorry enough to cry if it would do any good. He was an old friend; dear Lizzie liked him. And he was the heartiest, jolliest, pleasantest old fellow I ever saw. And speaking of him reminds me of a little verse I have had by me, suggested by one of his sayings. I inclose it. Perhaps it might fill a corner of 'Our Young Folks.' But I am by no means sure that it is fit for such a place."

Charlie used to perch on the back of his master's chair at meal-time, as is suggested in the poem. No bird or other pet was allowed to be permanently caged in the house. Charlie was a gray parrot, and when he came into the Quaker household had a full and rather profane vocabulary. Gradually, however, his habit of swearing wore away, and he fell into the quiet and decorous ways of the house. Occasionally, under excitement, he would have a relapse, fall from grace, and shock the neighborhood. One Sunday morning he climbed the lightning-rod, while the bells were ringing for meeting, and the street was full of church-goers, and having reached the chimney-top began to dance, and sing, and swear, to the mingled amusement and amazement of passers-by, and to the intense annoyance of the shocked household beneath, who could devise no way of stopping the bird's unholy frolic.

[1] It appeared in the number for June, 1866.

Charlie afterward danced on that chimney to his sorrow. He tumbled down a flue, and was not discovered and rescued for two days. He was missed, but it was thought some cat or dog had made way with him, although usually he could easily frighten away any animal that molested him. His powers of speech caused intense surprise on the part of animals which had not become accustomed to him. From the house-top he would sing out "Whoa!" and stop the horses in the street. When it was found that he was down the flue, although it was in the middle of the night, a man was sent for, who let down a pole with a cleat on it. As the weak and sooty bird was being drawn up, he responded feebly to the encouraging call of his master, and as he emerged, "Poor Charlie wants water," was his whisper. He never fully recovered his strength, and soon after died, and was buried in the garden. Charlie had the bad habit of nipping at the leg of a person whose trousers happened to be hitched above the top of the boot. One day Mr. Whittier was being worn out by a prosy harangue from a visitor, who sat in a rocking-chair and swayed back and forth as he talked. As he rocked, his trousers reached the point of danger, and Charlie noticed it as soon as did the poet, who now had something that interested him. Charlie sidled up, unseen by the orator; Mr. Whittier foresaw a sudden end of his harangue, and was not disappointed. There was a little nip, a sharp exclamation, and the thread of the discourse was broken! The relieved poet now had the floor as an apologist for his discourteous parrot. When

Charlie died, Mr. Whittier wrote to his niece, who was then away at school: "We buried poor Charlie decently in the snow-bank. If there is a parrot's paradise, he ought to go there. I miss him sadly — his jolly hallo! and droll whispers."

A little bantam rooster of bright plumage succeeded the parrot as a pet. He was often to be seen perched on the poet's shoulder, and liked to be buttoned up inside the Quaker coat. Whittier taught this bantam to wake up his young niece at the proper hour by his crowing. He would open her chamber door and put the little bird on top of it, where he stayed and crowed until his young mistress acknowledged she was awake.

The cats and dogs of the house were Whittier's especial pets, and he delighted in teasing them and teaching them droll tricks; this teasing propensity it seems was not exercised merely upon the animal pets of the household, but his mother and sister were sometimes its victims, as the following anecdote illustrates.

While attending a Quarterly Meeting at Amesbury many years ago, Sophronia Page, an eminent minister, was entertained by the Whittiers. On starting for her home in Danvers, before daybreak, she took Abigail Whittier's bonnet instead of her own. At that time every Quaker bonnet was like every other, as to the outward, and in the dim light she did not notice the name written in the crown. On reaching her home she discovered her mistake, and at once sent the bonnet with an explanatory note to Mr. Whittier. On reading the note, Mr. Whittier left the bandbox in the hall,

and seating himself beside his mother began to sigh and rub his brow, apparently in great distress of mind. His mother's anxiety was aroused at once. "Why, Greenleaf," said she, "what is the matter? Is thee ill?" "No, I am not ill," he replied, "but I am feeling very much troubled, very sad." "Tell me what has happened!" she exclaimed. He continued to sigh, and finally said, "Mother, I dread to tell thee, for it will shock and grieve thee so; it will make thee sick at heart." With increasing excitement she cried, "Don't keep me in suspense; tell me the worst at once!" With apparent effort and enforced calmness he said, "Mother, has thee heard from Sophronia Page since she left here?" "Why, no, has anything happened to her — is she sick?" "She is not sick," he replied, "and no ordinary thing has happened to her — it is worse than that — there is something terrible coming out against her — it will shake the Yearly Meeting!" At this time dissensions, which afterward culminated in a separation, were rife in the Society of Friends, and Abigail Whittier, thinking only of this threatening cloud, said: "What is thee talking about? I believe Sophronia Page is too well balanced to take any rash steps in the Society troubles. Don't keep me waiting any longer." "Well, mother, if thee must know, I will tell thee — Sophronia Page, incredible as it may seem, has been taking what does not belong to her." At this his mother's indignation was aroused, and she replied, "Greenleaf, I 'd have thee know that Sophronia Page is not a woman to make light jokes about. I don't

see any fun in such talk." To which he gravely replied: "Mother, this is no idle joke; I am telling the truth. Sophronia Page has been taking what does not belong to her. *Thee will have to believe it*, for she has begun to restore what she has taken!" He then produced the bonnet, and his mother said: "Greenleaf, if thee were twenty years younger, I would take thee over my knee!"

TO CELIA THAXTER.

15th 2d mo., 1867.

God has been very good to me. I sometimes think I am about the richest man in the world, not exactly in greenbacks and deeds of warranty, but in loves and friendships, and the dear sense of kind remembrances and wishes flowing in upon me, peopling loneliness with forms of beauty, and displacing silence with sweet sounds. Would I forego all this for a name on 'Change? By no means. I ought to be thankful to the dear Lord, and I trust I am. But it all seems so undeserved; the partial praise of my friends makes me feel like one whose credit outruns his capital. I don't want to obtain anything under false pretenses. . . . I thought after it was too late that it would have been so nice to have had thee stay till the next morning; and when the firelight flickered and danced on the walls in the evening twilight, I thought how pleasant it would be to have thee with us, warmed and glorified in that hearth-light. . . . I will send thee a copy of my little book ["The Tent on the Beach"] in a few days. There are some things

in it that I think thee will like. I wish thee would write out for the "Atlantic" some of the good things thee know of the Shoals and the Shoalers. I have never heard anything equal in dramatic effect to thy stories one evening in the parlor at Appledore.

Mrs. Thaxter contributes to these pages this interesting note of reminiscence of her long and intimate friendship with Mr. Whittier: —

I cannot express the pleasure I have had in knowing Mr. Whittier so intimately for so many years. Ever since the first time he came here to the Isles of Shoals with his dear sister, thirty years ago, and fixed me with those brilliant eyes of his as he quietly asked me, "Can thee tell me who wrote 'The Summer Day'?" we have had the most delightful friendship, and I miss him out of the world more than any words can say.

His sympathy and interest in all I did were invaluable to me. He never gave me any peace till I wrote the book about the Shoals. "It is thy kismet," he said; "thee *must* do it!"

Po Hill, in Amesbury, where he lived so long, is the last hill of any importance that marks our coast line toward the southwest from the Shoals, and I never looked across without thinking of him there in the pleasant years that are gone, and greeting him silently as a near and dear neighbor. "Po Hill sends Appledore good-morning," was a favorite way he had of beginning his letters. His very last letter to me, dated a year ago, said, "I

want to go to the Shoals once more, if possible, this summer." But when at last the crowd thinned toward autumn, and I wrote to him that a comfortable room was ready for him, he had gone out on an unknown sea upon a longer voyage, and I saw him no more. For the inestimable boon of his beautiful friendship I am profoundly grateful, as all must be to whom such a blessing was vouchsafed. Our correspondence continued from the first year of his coming here through the whole thirty years, and the sonnet[1] which I inclose was written the second summer, on his way home to Amesbury, as he left the Shoals.

CELIA THAXTER.

APPLEDORE, ISLES OF SHOALS,
June, 1893.

[1] "When we were just losing sight of Appledore the sun was in clouds and the sea all around dark, but the island itself lay, far off, steeped in warmest sunshine. Having nothing better to do, I thought of some rhymes, which I venture to send thee, only wishing I had something more graceful and beautiful to offer: —

"Under the shadow of a cloud, the light
Died out upon the waters, like a smile
Chased from a face by grief. Following the flight
Of a lone bird that, scudding with the breeze,
Dipped its crank wing in leaden-colored seas,
I saw in sunshine lifted, clear and bright,
On the horizon's rim the Fortunate Isle
That claims thee as its fair inhabitant,
And glad of heart I whispered, 'Be to her,
Bird of the summer sea, my messenger;
Tell her, if Heaven a fervent prayer will grant,
This light that falls her island home above
Making its slopes of rock and greenness gay,
A partial glory midst surrounding gray,
Shall prove an earnest of our Father's love,
More and more shining to the perfect day.'"

J. G. W.

There was a rumor abroad early in 1867 that Mr. Whittier was about to marry. He refers to this in his letter to Lucy Larcom of March 16: "Credulity, thy name is woman! So thee believed that report, almost! Well, it may be true, but the first intimation of it came to me through the newspapers. *They* ought to know. I can't imagine how or where it started. It vexed me, but of course there was no help for it. It is the cruelest irony to congratulate a hopeless old bachelor, within one year of sixty, on such a prospect. I don't know about this 'freedom of the press.'"

TO APPHIA H. HOWARD.

5th 3d mo., 1867.

The idea of offering matrimonial congratulations to a hopeless old bachelor trying to thread a needle to sew on his buttons! As well talk of agility to a cripple, or of a rise in government stocks to a town pauper. Of course, thee did n't believe the silly story. I don't care much about it, but I should be sorry to have to read congratulations upon it by every mail. I wish the newspaper scamp who started it nothing worse than to be an old bachelor like myself, or to have a wife like Mrs. Caudle.

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

18th 3d mo., 1867.

It was very kind in thee to write me a good long letter, knowing that I could never make a fair return, my letters being like the Irishman's blanket, "too short at both ends." When I read thy letter

I wanted to answer it right off, but I was not able to write then, and in fact am not now. I enjoyed thy little visit greatly, and sincerely hope thee will feel called upon to repeat it. On ——'s account I am glad she is in her old home once more, glad that she so kindly remembers me, and glad too for the little domestic intimation conveyed in thy floral symbols; for there are so few really fit to be mothers that it is matter of rejoicing when all the holy and beautiful conditions of maternity seem united in a pure and noble woman. God bless her, and make her highest hopes realities!

TO LUCY LARCOM.

4th mo., 16, 1867.

The spring delays — the time of mayflowers has nearly come, but they are not quite ready yet. I would like to have thee up here at the time of their blossoming. The snow still lies in the woods of Follymill. To-day winter has come back again, and a wind of despair blows out of the bitter east. I have read and done nothing for a long time. It seems a poor life of idleness, but I do not see how I can help it. I have had a great many strangers coming to look at me, and make speeches to me. It 's a sort of thing to make one feel sadly mean and ridiculous. I envy the stout, steel-muscled farmers. I would rather chop wood than talk poetry with strangers. And indeed I think the life of a hard-working farmer or mechanic altogether more enviable than that of a writer or politician. Not but that poetry has been a great solace and refreshing, at times, to me; and I am grateful for

the gift of verse which has been vouchsafed to me. But Plato and old Mr. Weller, I fear, are right in their discouragement of poets.

TO GRACE GREENWOOD.

6th mo., 1867.

I did not know of thy severe illness last fall, but that is no reason thee should be sick again next fall. Do not allow thyself to dwell upon such anticipations, my dear friend, but if tolerably comfortable to-day enjoy it to the extent of possibility and trust the good God for the future. At one time last winter it seemed hardly possible that I should live to see the orchards bloom again, but here I am still. God be praised therefor. Much of the time I can do little more than sit and think of old days and old friends, among whom thou art always numbered, very thankful to the kind Providence which has left me so many blessings of memory.

TO CELIA THAXTER.

8th mo., 8, 1867.

It is to sheer kindness of heart, my dear friend, that I owe thy pleasant letters so vividly representing life at the Shoals. They are wonderfully hospitable letters — they give me the freedom of the island. I sit by thy parlor fire in the stormy nights; I see the tossing boats in the little harbor; the islands ringed round with foam; I feel the spray as it tosses up through cleft and gorge; and I hear thee telling stories to the young folks, and half fancy myself a boy among them, nestling close to thee, with "not unpleasant horror" as the

tragedy deepens. It 's all very nice, but it puzzles me to know why I am favored in this way. There must be some mistake ; I am getting what don't really belong to me. It was in no mock humility I wrote in "Andrew Rykman" : —

> "I, who hear with secret shame
> Praise that paineth more than blame,
> Rich alone in favors lent,
> Virtuous by accident,
> Doubtful where I fain would rest,
> Frailest where I seem the best,
> Only strong for lack of test."

I am sure if I were younger, if I did not feel daily and hourly admonitions of a frail hold upon life, my good friends would go far to spoil me with flattery and kind offices. What right has one to be receiving all the time, and giving nothing in return? After two or three days of pain and lassitude, when the grasshopper becomes a burden, I feel so powerless and worthless, so lost in the absorbing egotism of mere physical sensation, that I should reckon myself a very dear bargain at that lowest of all conceivable prices, "a tinker's whistle." . . . That Sunday night when thee was up aloft in the cupola, I was sitting until late on the piazza of our shanty at Salisbury beach, watching the revolving light of White Island, and telling my nieces of my pleasant day there. All the afternoon we saw the dim outline of the Shoals. At sunset, the level sun flashed on the windows of Appledore, as if a sudden splendor had risen out of the ocean. I spent two days at the beach, and went home, leaving my nieces, and keeping bachelor's hall for some days. I had a lady visitor part

of the time and made her "work her passage." Between us we made a nice lot of currant jelly. I went over the river to Curson's Mills. Mary, Charlotte Forten, and myself went up the Artichoke, floating lazily along its dreamy shores, where the drooping ferns, azaleas, and witch-hazels mirror themselves in the still water, or as Marvell says: —

> "Where all things gaze themselves and doubt
> If they be in it or without."

An illustrated edition of Whittier's poems was in preparation in 1867, reference to which is had in the following note, which inclosed for the "Atlantic" the poem "George L. Stearns": "I meant to have brought the sheets of the 'Poems' with me to Boston, but as I have not been able, I now send them. Unless I make a complete remodeling of them, I must leave them much as they are. 'Mogg Megone' should be first in *place* as in *time*, and 'In War Time' should follow 'Home Ballads,' and close the book. Of course there will be a new arrangement as to the notes, which some of your folks must see to, as I cannot tell to what pages they will refer. . . . I have nothing I could venture to send you for the 'Atlantic,' unless the lines inclosed, on the death of Major Stearns, will serve your purpose. The poem is rather ragged and unkempt; but I think it would lose more than it would gain by any attempt to smooth it. The first line is all out of proportion as to length, but it says just what I wanted to say."

In a note to Mrs. Fields he gives the first hint

of his ballad "The Palatine," August 18, 1867: "I have written a little ballad which I am quite doubtful of, and wish I could consult thee and James T. about it. If my head will allow me to copy it and correct it, I shall send it to you, if you do not anticipate me by coming yourselves."

The legend on which this ballad is founded was told to Mr. Whittier by his friend, Joseph P. Hazard, of Newport, R. I., two years before the poem was written. About two years after it was published, he received a curious letter from Mr. Benjamin Corydon, of Napoli, N. Y., who wrote: —

"The 'Palatine' was a ship that was driven upon Block Island, in a storm, more than a hundred years ago. Her people had just got ashore, and were on their knees thanking God for saving them from drowning, when the islanders rushed upon them and murdered them all. That was a little more than the Almighty could stand, so He sent the Fire or Phantom Ship to let them know He had not forgotten their wickedness. She was seen once a year, on the same night of the year on which the murders occurred, as long as any of the wreckers were living; but never after all were dead. I must have seen her eight or ten times — perhaps more — in my early days. It is seventy years or more since she was last seen. My father lived right opposite Block Island, on the main land, so we had a fair view of her as she passed down by the island; then she would disappear. She resembled a full-rigged ship, with her sails all set and all ablaze. It was the grandest sight I ever saw in all my life. I know of only two living

who ever saw her, — Benjamin L. Knowles, of Rhode Island, now 94 years old, and myself, now in my 92d year."

Mr. Whittier's correspondence with Mr. Fields in regard to attending the readings given by Charles Dickens in Boston, in December, 1867, shows how real was his dread of finding himself surrounded by a large audience, unless he had the means of ready escape when the strain upon his nerves became too great for endurance. Fields had promised a good seat for him, but on the evening of the day of the reading, December 21, he sent this note: "Up to the last moment I have hoped to occupy the seat so kindly promised me for this evening. But I find I must give it up. Gladden with it the heart of some poor wretch who dangled and shivered all in vain in your long queue the other morning. I must read my 'Pickwick' alone, as the Marchioness played cribbage. I would so like nevertheless to see Dickens and shake that creating hand of his. It is as well, doubtless, so far as he is concerned, that I cannot do it. He will have enough and too much of that, I fear. I dreamed last night I saw him surrounded by a mob of ladies each with her scissors snipping at his hair, and he seemed in a fair way to be 'shaven and shorn' like the priest in the house that Jack built."

In the afternoon of the same day, he had arrived in Boston, and had taken a room at his usual inn, the Marlboro, whence he sent this note to Fields: "I came in from Lynn not expecting to hear the reading this evening, and not well enough really to go into a crowded hall for two hours. If

thee have any use for the ticket, or if anybody would be disappointed by not having it, I shall be quite as well satisfied to stay quietly where I am. I would like to see Dickens, but I have no head fit to hear him; and should prefer on the whole not to go this evening. Two mortal hours of listening is more than I can bear."

He did not attend the reading, but he had an opportunity of meeting the author whose writings he had so thoroughly enjoyed.

During the winter of 1867–68, Mr. Whittier was quite seriously ill with a fever. On the 18th of January, he was unable to write, but by the hand of an attendant he sent word to Mr. Fields that for four weeks he had been more seriously ill than he had ever been previously; the slow fever seemed at that time to be nearly ended, leaving him without appetite, and very weak. On the 28th, he wrote to Lucy Larcom: "At last I am allowed pen and ink (perhaps it would have been better if the prohibition had begun twenty years ago!) and can speak for myself. I have been very sick, but now am gaining every day. It will, however, be a good while before I shall get up even to my usual very moderate degree of health and strength. It is a marvel to me that I am as well as I am. I long for dry land, and the snow looks dreary! If I was well I should like it. I have done a great business in building castles in Spain. It is good and cheap amusement, and it is just about as well as if real timber and bricks were in use."

An illustrated edition of Whittier's poems was

published in 1868, and it was while this was in preparation that the following letter, dated April 2, was written to Mr. Fields. The proof-sheet it inclosed was of the poem "The Clear Vision," which was published in the May number of the "Atlantic": "I send back the proof with deference to thy suggestions. I think, as it now stands, the poem is good — considering who wrote it. I also send herewith a list of the ballads which I think best to print in the illustrated form. I have some question about including 'St. John.' I have taken 'The Wreck of Rivermouth,' only, from 'The Tent on the Beach.' The list will make quite too large a volume, as it is. What should be the title of the book? The old name 'Home Ballads' perhaps would do. I think the pieces will admit of some excellent illustrations — better, it seems to me, than 'Snow-Bound,' and indeed I regard the ballads as better than 'Snow-Bound,' — more variety and more picturesque. If thee think any other ballads would be better than these I have selected, let me know."

On the 12th of July he wrote: "In printing the ballads for your illustrated volume, I wish you to make the following correction in 'Mary Garvin.' The lines —

> 'And in the tales our fathers told, the songs our mothers sung,
> Tradition snowy-bearded leans on Romance ever young,'

should read thus: —

> 'And if, in tales our fathers told, the songs our mothers sung,
> Tradition wears a snowy beard, Romance is always young.'"

In June, 1868, Mr. Whittier said in a note to

Mr. Fields: "I have written a poem, 'The Two Rabbins,' a fantasy of mine, which I like better than most things I have written of late."

In September, Mrs. Fields urged him to read something from his writings before a Boston audience, in aid of a charity, and she received this reply, dated September 9: "Thee ask a miracle of me. Anything within the bounds of my possibilities I would do, as thee very well know, not only for the cause's sake, but for thine. Ask me to dance the polka, or walk a slack rope from the Park Street steeple to the State House dome — but don't ask me to stand up and read my rhymes to a Boston audience. I fancy I see myself doing it! And yet, how I wish I could! I am so sorry to have to say no, and disappoint thee. But it would be utterly impossible. I could not do it if I tried."

A pleasant incident in Whittier's life during the year 1868 was the finding again of his old Hartford friend, Frederick A. P. Barnard, who, soon after the days they spent together in Connecticut, went South and made a name for himself in science and in the cause of education. For thirty-five years the two friends never heard from each other except through their books, but when Barnard took the presidency of Columbia College, he wrote a long and affectionate letter to Whittier, which must have called out a reply equaling it in the warmth of its friendly interest. But the reply has not been found among the papers of President Barnard.

The following letter to Celia Thaxter shows

how he spent a part of the summer of 1868. It is dated 4th, 7th mo., 1868: "How long is it since I was complaining bitterly of cold weather, and setting my hearth aglow, in the leafy month of June? I am sitting linen-clad, and bareheaded, by the open piazza door, trying to get a breath of the sweet air that just stirs the topmost spray of the lowest tree by the garden fence. On the opposite side of the road a boy is languidly discharging his patriotic duty to the Fourth by exploding a cracker at long intervals. A bumblebee, Emerson's 'animated torrid zone,' has found the sunshine a little too much even for him, and has left the roses to try the temperature of my room, and is buzzing and droning like a steam engine round my head as I write. The thermometer is at 100, with an upward tendency. I have been refrigerating myself with cool recollections of the mountains and the Shoals. . . . Since my return I have had company, and have been to the 'Laurel Party,' where I saw a great many people."

The laurel parties here alluded to, and which became one of the social institutions of Newburyport, are thus described by Mrs. A. B. Bassett, of Newton, Mass., the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Ashby: —

"My dear father and mother gave these parties annually for twenty-one years. They were very pleasant occasions, and became notable, as the years passed on, increasing in attendance, and including many distinguished visitors. The first was a small party of friends from out of town,

invited to visit the Laurel Grounds, in the perfection of the laurel bloom. This proved so enjoyable that it was repeated with additions, year after year. To many, old and young, it was a red-letter day in the year's calendar. Occurring the last of June, the weather, with but one exception, was perfect. The arrival and meeting of old friends, the repast at our house in Newburyport, the sail up the Merrimac to the grove on its banks, the redolent pines, the beauty of the laurels, the appetizing lunch at noon followed by speeches and songs, made the hours pass quickly, and the time for the good-bys came all too soon. Interesting and distinguished visitors were often with us. Whittier was always present, when his health and other circumstances permitted, and frequently wrote poems for the occasion. Four of these may be found in his collected works, entitled 'Our River,' 'The Laurels,' 'Revisited,' and 'June on the Merrimac.'"

At one of these charming gatherings the guests, who had so many times enjoyed the generous hospitalities of Mr. and Mrs. Ashby, presented them an album containing their photographs and many beautiful tokens of their grateful appreciation; upon the first page were these lines, by Whittier: —

"DEAR FRIENDS:

Accept this Book, whose pages hold
The sun-traced shadows manifold
Of friends, who 've known you long and well
At city hearth, in sylvan dell,
Enjoying under roof and tree
Your liberal hospitality;
Who, grateful, own that while you gave

Your life-long labor to the slave
(A labor crowned with more success
Than hope could dream, or wisdom guess),
You kept warm hearts, and opened wide
Your windows on life's sunny side.
Take, then, the Volume with our thanks;
And long upon your river banks,
When in azalea-gladdened woods
The June sun swells the laurel buds,
May we still meet, as we have met,
And larger make to you our debt."

TO LUCY LARCOM.

8th mo., 1868.

I am doing nothing at a great rate; come and help me. I, too, have dreamed of the Shoals and the hills — but they must come to me. They must return my visits now. Bring thy painting traps with thee; perhaps we may find a flower in despite of the drought. . . . Everything seems returning to its original dust. We are eating our bushel instead of our "peck of dirt." We can't lay the dust of the streets for fear the water will turn to steam, and blow up the cart.

TO CELIA THAXTER.[1]

8th mo., 1, 1868.

By the way, thee ought to like that poem, for it would scarcely have been written but for thee. The thought of thee and thy sea stories and pictures prompted it, and when writing I was wondering whether thee would like it. As a Quaker, thee knows, I cannot have anything to do with the old heathen Nine, and so I have made thee serve my

[1] Mrs. Thaxter had written to Mr. Whittier to tell him of the interest taken in his ballad *The Wreck of Rivermouth*, which she had read to some of the guests at the Appledore.

purpose as a sort of tenth Muse. I could not have a better. . . . I send a bit of cardinal blossom from the foot of Po Hill. The river banks are scarlet with them. . . . We are drowned with rain; but to-day the air is crystal clear, and the green earth is beautiful. My pear-trees are breaking with heavy fruit, and the grapes are like those the Israelites found at Eschol.

TO MRS. APPHIA HOWARD.

8th mo., 1868.

I have had a constant dropping in of visitors this summer — mostly strangers — waifs from the seashore and mountains. The other day a plain-spoken neighbor of mine called on me for some matter of business, and when I told her there were two ladies in the parlor, waiting for me, she exclaimed, "What! more of them! Was ever man so beset? But it's good enough for you. You should have married a woman long ago, and she would have kept all the rest off." . . . I looked into the Suffrage Convention in Boston — a very dignified body. I see they put my name on the list of officers. But I am not willing now to connect myself with *any* organization. I am more than ready to welcome woman to the same rights which I enjoy. But with the abolition of slavery I felt myself released from *all* societies, save the one I was born in. When in Boston, I dined with Sumner, Emerson, and Whipple. Sumner seemed in good spirits, "jolly under creditable circumstances," like Mark Tapley. I hope Grant will have the grace and good sense to put him at the

head of the State Department. No man is so well fitted for it as he is.

The inspiration of Mr. Whittier's charming poem "Among the Hills" came to him in the summer of 1867. It is a tender and romantic love-story in verse, idealizing New England farm life; with a prelude which furnishes the darker shades needed to make the picture a faithful reproduction of rural scenes he undertook to portray. But this prelude did not appear in its present form when the ballad was originally published in the "Atlantic" for January, 1868, under the title of "The Wife: an Idyl of Bearcamp Water"; neither was the ballad proper quite half as long as is now "Among the Hills." It is an interesting study to note the changes through which this beautiful poem passed on its way to its present completeness. This blossoming out occurred in the summer of 1868. In its original form there were sixty-four lines in the Prelude, and it did not deal with the prosaic and disagreeable side of farm life, its shiftlessness and discomfort, as does the Prelude in its present form, which consists of one hundred and fifty-six lines. The passage which prophesies the gradual improvement in the conditions of farm life in New England, now being fulfilled, —

> "Even this simple lay of mine
> May seem the burden of a prophecy,
> Finding its late fulfillment in a change
> Slow as the oak's growth, lifting manhood up
> Through broader culture, finer manners, love,
> And reverence, to the level of the hills," —

read as follows: —

"Even this little lay of mine
May lift some burden from a heavy heart,
Or make a light one lighter for its sake."

The whole tenor of the Prelude is changed, so as to make it a new poem, with a burden of rebuke to those who are "blind to the beauty everywhere revealed" about them. The ballad proper enlarges upon the sweet story as originally told, making three hundred and forty-four lines instead of one hundred and sixty-eight, as at first. It is the landlady of the inn who tells the story in the latest version, and the landlord in the earliest. Mr. Whittier's first thought was to call this poem "A Summer Idyl," to offset his winter idyl, "Snow-Bound." But while he was reading the proofs of the book, he wrote to Fields: "It now occurs to me that it might be as well to omit the 'Summer Idyl' in the title, as I may sometime give something better entitled to the name." Its original sub-title, "An Idyl of Bearcamp Water," was also considered, but after the book was in press the name "Among the Hills" was decided upon. Comparatively few changes were made in the proof-sheets. In a letter to Fields, in October, Whittier refers to some suggestions for the improvement of the poem, and adds: "The reader will have to take something for granted. It is not to be expected that I should manage a scene of this kind like one who 'has been there and stayed all night.' I am not sure that I have bettered the verse beginning 'Her air, her smile, her head's fine poise.' Glance at the two and choose." It was decided to retain the form of the original magazine version: —

"Her air, her smile, her motions, told
Of womanly completeness."

The next stanza to this is a new one, not found in the magazine, and there is a story about the first line of it, connecting it with the name of James G. Blaine. In every edition for about a dozen years it read as it was originally written by Whittier: "Not beautiful in curve and line." But upon his first visit to Amesbury, Mr. Blaine took up "Among the Hills," and suggested an improvement upon this line, which was at once adopted by the poet. It now reads: "Not fair alone in curve and line."

There were ten new poems published with this ballad, including "The Meeting," "Hymn for the House of Worship at Georgetown," and "Lines on a Fly-Leaf." In returning the second proof of the work to Mr. Fields, November 1, 1868, Mr. Whittier wrote: "Thee will be sorry to see that I have made trouble for the printers by adding a few lines to the Prelude, which seem necessary to express my meaning clearly. I have done with it now, and give it over to its fate. In 'The Meeting' I have heeded thy hints, except as respects the first line.[1] I don't see as I can alter that. It might be

'The elder folks shook hands at last.'

Would that be better?"

The poem "On a Fly-Leaf," of which he said in

[1] The line as it was published in the magazine, February, 1868, was

"The elders shook their hands at last."

The change here suggested was made.

a note to Fields, "They are some verses I very much like myself," was suggested by a book then recently published from the pen of Gail Hamilton, entitled "A New Atmosphere." The felicitous portrait of this brilliant essayist was so true to the life that it was instantly recognized by the public, and called out from her a witty protest in verse.

The other friends to whom Whittier refers in the poem "On a Fly-Leaf" are Lydia Maria Child, Grace Greenwood, Anna E. Dickinson, and Mrs. Stowe.

The "Hymn for the House of Worship at Georgetown" was first published in the "Independent," January 16, 1868, and that paper made the following comment upon the fact that he who gave the money for its erection had imposed a condition upon his gift.

A Marred Memorial. — Mr. George Peabody, the banker, gave money for the erection of the Memorial Church in Georgetown, Mass., the town of his birth. The church was dedicated on the 8th of January, with interesting exercises, one of the striking features of which was the singing of the following hymn, written for the occasion by John G. Whittier. [Here follows the poem.] We venture to say that if the poet had known the conditions which the banker saw fit to impose on the Memorial Church, the poem would never have been written, and its author's name would never have been lent to the occasion. A correspondent of the "Independent" writes: "Mr. Peabody

says in his letter that the church shall never be used for any lectures, discussions of political subjects, or other matters inconsistent with the gospel. I do not give his precise words, but this is the substance. The church will be deeded to the society on the express condition that neither Liberty nor Temperance, nor any other subject of Reform, shall ever be introduced into the pulpit."

Mr. Whittier published a card in the Boston "Transcript" of January 30, as follows: —

"In writing the 'Hymn for the Memorial Church at Georgetown,' the author, as his verses indicate, has sole reference to the tribute of a brother and sister to the memory of a departed mother, — a tribute which seemed and still seems to him, in itself considered, very beautiful and appropriate; but he has since seen with surprise and sorrow a letter read at the dedication, imposing certain extraordinary restrictions upon the society which is to occupy the house. It is due to himself, as a simple act of justice, to say that had he known of the existence of that letter previously, the hymn would never have been written, nor his name in any way connected with the proceedings."

The following letters to Hon. J. J. Currier refer to the naming of a ship in honor of the poet: —

29th, 12th mo., 1868.

I shall be proud to have my name associated with a Merrimac-built vessel. I heartily thank the owners for this indication of their esteem, and hope they will have no occasion to regret their choice.

14th, 1st mo., 1869.

I am sorry that the state of my health will not permit me to avail myself of thy kind invitation to witness the launching this morning of the good ship in which I feel more than a nominal interest. I hope the Merrimac will give her a kindly welcome to her proper element. If my prayers were but those of a righteous man, that "avail much," she should have none but prosperous voyages. In the course of my life, I have done something in the seafaring line, as well as in Spanish castles, but unfortunately my ships rarely come to port. It is a satisfaction, therefore, to feel that I have now an interest in a stancher craft, substantial as oaken ribs and copper bolts can make her.

TO BAYARD TAYLOR.

5th mo., 6, 1869.

When I got thy kind letter inviting me to thy home, I had just read the preface to thy last volume, and was greatly saddened by the thought that I was never again to travel with thee. And I thought of my sister, how she and I had followed thee in all thy wanderings, so happy and so grateful for the privilege. There must come an end to all things — and I am not surprised at thy final decision, but I am none the less sorry for it. Thy invitation finds me too ill for visiting. I must remain quiet at home, avoiding exposure and excitement, as the sole condition of comparative freedom from suffering. And yet I long for the milder air of Chester County; but it costs too much now to get there. I saw thy description of Cedarcroft.

. . . The place must be very charming, and I am glad to see a poet with such fitting surroundings. Never fear that those who have followed thee thus far will not be with thee in other walks of literature.

TO CELIA THAXTER.[1]

5th mo., 18, 1869.

I think I must be "growing in grace" to forgive thee, as I do, for letting thyself down to autograph-hunting. However, I don't know as I can claim much merit, for the pleasure of hearing from thee more than counterbalances the annoyance of being hunted. I am sorry dear Mrs. F. is overworking herself, even in *doing* good, when simply *being* good, as she is, is a joy and a benediction.

"Dear girl, for whom all sweet flowers bloom,
And happy birds their welcome bring,
What can my evening lend thy morn?
Or my late autumn give thy spring?

"I will not teach in mournful speech
That joys are brief, and hopes are lies;
To life well spent, its sun's descent
Is cloudless as its morning skies."

TO THE SAME.

8th mo., 12, 1869.

I am sorry my good cousins, the Cartlands, did not reach the island before we left. They are very dear to me. I wish thee could have known Moses A. Cartland; there are so few like him now left in the world! I am almost tempted to run the

[1] Mrs. Thaxter had called for an autograph for a young friend of hers, which was sent with the verses.

gauntlet of your great crowd on the island for the sake of seeing them, and bringing them so near to thee as to make thee know and love them as I do, for there are few better people in the world than Joseph and Gertrude Whittier Cartland.

An illustrated edition of "Ballads of New England" was published in 1869, and Rev. Dr. J. W. Hanson made inquiry of Mr. Whittier in regard to the localities represented in the engravings. This is Mr. Whittier's reply, which will interest those who possess this edition of his ballads: "In 'The Playmate' the first picture, Ramoth Hill, is about two miles from my residence. 'The lilies blossom in the pond' is a sketch from Lake Attitash, or Kimball's Pond, in Amesbury. The pictures of 'Cobbler Keezar's Vision' are from the banks of the Powow River in Amesbury. 'Amy Wentworth' is Portsmouth, and the harbor, and Kittery Point. 'The Countess,' Rocks Village, in Haverhill. 'Mary Garvin,' Saco River, near its mouth. 'The Rangers,' Casco Bay, near Portland. 'Wreck of Rivermouth,' Hampton river and the Isles of Shoals. 'The Changeling,' Hampton, Newbury, and Ipswich. I have thus briefly indicated the localities of the pictures, which I think are often better than the verses they illustrate."

While this work was in the hands of the printers, Mr. Whittier wrote to Fields: "The proofs arrived safely. Looking over them, the beauty of the engravings almost makes me ashamed of the verses they illustrate. In those of 'Cobbler Keezar's Vision,' 'Wreck of Rivermouth,' 'The Play-

mate,' and 'The Countess,' especially, I recognize the scenery familiar from boyhood, and which I have endeavored to associate in the mind of the reader of my ballads with the characters and incidents of local traditions."

In the "Atlantic" for December, 1869, W. D. Howells reviewed the illustrated edition of the "Ballads of New England," with the following complimentary reference to the illustrations designed by Harry Fenn: —

"Of course many things escape the formalities of praise; the light of the blooming apple-trees, the grace of the starry lilies that rock so light upon the ponds, the gloom and sorrow of the stormy seas, the wildness of the hemlock-bordered, rock-fretted forest streams, or their elm-bowered peace and solitude, the strength of the gnarled and twisted cedars, the brave cheerfulness of the lamps kindled in the lighthouse after the splendid sunset following the shipwrecking storm, the melancholy beauty of the harvest fields, — all these elusive charms are here, though they refuse to reappear in our phrase. Yet they are to be felt by all; not less by the untechnical many who can never understand the skill that made them perceptible, — but who can nevertheless meet both poet and artist in the common and finer air of sentiment and sympathy, — than by the critical few who without enjoying them more will do a stricter justice to the artistic power in them. . . . Some of Mr. Fenn's pictures are made on a hint of the poet, and some are the reflection, in a sister art, of the poet's descriptions; they are always faithful to his spirit,

and one believes that the author must have conceived just that lovely vision of the wayside orchard with its brier-grown wall, which the artist's pencil evokes from the lines in 'Skipper Ireson's Ride':

> 'Sweetly along the Salem road
> Bloom of lilac and orchard showed,'

and that in 'The Countess' he had in mind just that outlook from under the old bridge toward the hillside graveyard; for they seem as much the image of his thought as that grand stretch of glad New England landscape, — farm, village, city, and sea, — in 'Cobbler Keezar's Vision,' or that equally careful response to his words in 'Telling the Bees,' where, taking the poem and the picture together, it is hard to know who is most poet and who most painter."

Among the poems written in 1869 and early in 1870, were "Howard at Atlanta," "In School-Days," "Marguerite," and "The Pageant." The origin of the first named poem was a letter from the headquarters of General O. O. Howard, at Atlanta, relating the incidents of the freedmen's school, as it is told in the poem.

Some pictures were sent to Mr. Whittier by the publishers of "Our Young Folks," in the hope that he might fit verses to them. To Lucy Larcom, then editing this juvenile magazine, he wrote, under date of November 13, inclosing the poem, "In School-Days," the following note: "I could not make verses for the pictures, but I send thee herewith a bit which I am sure is child*ish*, if not child*like*. Be honest with it, and if it seems too spooney for a grave Quaker like myself, don't

compromise me by printing it. When I get a proof I may see something to mend or mar." He *did* find something to mend when the proof came. The manuscript of the poem lacked the two stanzas now numbered as second and third. That which is now the fourth stanza was the second, and so on. No other change was made in that first proof, and none has since been made. Comparing the poem with the first draft found among Mr. Whittier's papers, we find that several verbal changes were made before it was sent for publication. The third line of the first stanza originally read: —

"Around the branching sumachs grew."

In what is now the fourth stanza it was "*the* winter sun" instead of "*a* winter sun." The "*tangled* golden curls" in the fifth stanza were "*drooping*." In the seventh stanza it was "shy, watching him," instead of "as restlessly." In the next stanza, it was "*small*" and not "*soft* hand's light caressing." In the last stanza "life's *hard* school" was "life's *grown* school." The first draft of the two stanzas added in the proof had the line "Its worn door sill betraying," instead of the present form, "Its door's worn sill betraying." All these changes will be recognized as decided improvements. The poem first appeared in "Our Young Folks," for January, 1870. Henry W. Longfellow, in a letter to Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, makes this comment upon the poem: "There is something more in education than is set down in the school-books. Whittier has touched this point very poetically in that little lyric of his called 'In School-Days.'"

But when at last death shrouds thy frame
Thy well spent life serenely done
The world shall then enroll thy name
On glory's list with Washington
Fair then shall aer thy tomb
Shed tears of deep and sad regret
Whilst in perennial beauties bloom
The immortal part of Lafayette
1825

From the original copy of his verses to Lafayette, 1825.

In School-days
Still sits the school-house by the road
A ragged beggar sunning;
Around it still the sumachs grow
And blackberry vines are running

Long years ago a winter sun
Shone over it at setting,
Lit up its western window panes
And low eaves' icy fretting.

From the original draft of "In School Days," 1869.

FACSIMILE OF MR. WHITTIER'S HANDWRITING.

Many years ago, the little school-house commemorated in "School-Days" was sold, and it was to be removed by its purchaser. It had hardly started on its journey when one of the wheels on which it was placed broke down and the building was left in the middle of the road, where it was burned by the boys. The master's desk, "scarred by raps official," is preserved to this day, but it does not date back to the school-days of Whittier. In October, 1882, when the place was visited by Mr. Whittier for the last time, the foundation stones of the building and the door-stone were still in place. But after that date, in repairing the road, gravel was taken from the bank where the school-house stood, and the last vestige of it has disappeared. The little girl Mr. Whittier had in mind when he wrote the poem was Lydia Ayer, daughter of his nearest neighbor, who died at the age of fourteen. But Mr. Whittier himself never indicated that the poem was other than imaginative, except by including it in his collected works under the head of "subjective and reminiscent."

The sweet ballad "Marguerite" had the name of "The French Neutral" when it was written, which was nearly two years before it was published. The first draft did not quite satisfy the writer, and he laid it aside, after sending it to Mr. Fields, in November, 1869, with this comment: "What of this? Is it good or not? It seems to me to have real feeling in it. I hope I am not mistaken."

On the 30th of the same month, he wrote, in reply to some criticism by Fields: "I was by no means satisfied with the 'French Neutral,' when I

sent it, and had misgivings about it afterwards. I shall let it lie by awhile, and then see if it can be made anything of. In the mean time, I am glad to have it again in my possession. The subject is a good one if treated rightly."

In December, 1869, there was a statement published that Mr. Whittier had become so much dissatisfied with the new ways developing in the Society of Friends that he had given up attendance upon their meetings. To correct this misunderstanding he wrote the following letter, which was published in the "New Bedford Mercury": —

"I have found that the interest the best people of the different sects take in Quakerism is mainly confined to its realization of Practical Christianity, and I have noticed an ill-suppressed impatience and disgust when they find us [the Quakers] trying to win their favor by professing extreme Orthodoxy, and hunting heresy. . . . From my youth up, whenever my health permitted, I have been a constant attendant of our meetings for religious worship. *This* is true, however, that after our meeting-houses were denied by the Yearly Meeting for anti-slavery purposes,[1] I did not feel it in my way for several years to attend the annual meeting at Newport. From a feeling of duty I protested against that decision, but was given to understand pretty distinctly that there was no 'weight' in my words. It was a hard day for reformers: some stifled their convictions; others,

[1] In 1841, when Joseph Sturge was denied the use of the meeting-house at Newport, to deliver a lecture on emancipation in the West India Islands, a subject with which he was familiar from active participation in the work of securing the abolition of slavery in those islands.

not adding patience to their faith, allowed themselves to be worried out of the Society. Abolitionists holding office in the Society were very generally 'dropped out,' and the ark of the church staggered on with no profane anti-slavery hands upon it. I left the Society to its course, and took mine, feeling quite sure the work would go on whether Friends went with it or not. I never despaired of a great change in the views of the Society, but I knew I could do little to promote it. The pleas of youth and enthusiasm were not likely to be heeded by my elders, who, in common with the great majority of all sects, failed to comprehend the breadth and scope of a great Providential movement in God's controversy with oppression."

In November, 1870, he sent "Marguerite" to Celia Thaxter, asking her to criticise the ballad; "find all the faults in it and make a note of them." On the same day he sent the ballad to Mrs. Fields with the following note: "Some time ago I sent the first draft of this little ballad to J. T. F., and he, rightly considering its incompleteness, returned it. I have just been reconstructing it, and I send it, in the hope that it is better for my tinkering. You know that one thousand of the Acadians were distributed among the towns of Massachusetts, where they were mostly treated as paupers. I am not sure that I have succeeded in my attempt to recall the too probable scenes of a century ago. Read it, and let thee or J. T. F. tell me what it amounts to."

It was then accepted for the "Atlantic," and published in the number for March, 1871.

"The Pageant" was written for an illustrated

work that was projected for the holiday season of 1870. The plan was to collect winter pieces from Longfellow, Emerson, Bryant, Lowell, and Whittier, and bind them together in one volume, with suitable engravings. There was some misunderstanding about the time when the copy would be needed, and Fields wrote to hurry up Mr. Whittier's contribution. He replied, February 24, 1870, sending the MS. of "The Pageant," which was the only original poem in the collection, had the place of honor, and was beautifully illustrated by Harry Fenn: —

"I did not know that it was necessary to have the winter piece so soon, or I should have given the whole thing up at once, as I am in no condition of health to write at all. Since getting thy line I have been trying, however, to do my part of the book, and send to-day the result. I think it is too long, but could not help it. When in print I may be able to doctor it where it needs. It has cost me harder work than I would do again for any consideration, and has cost me a miserable headache and general out-of-sortness. Whether it is good or not, I am not able even to guess. It seems to me, however, a pretty accurate description of what I have seen. What will you call the book? How would 'Winter and its Poets' do? Or this? 'Winter: Ten Poems by H. W. Longfellow, R. W. Emerson, Wm. C. Bryant, James R. Lowell, and John G. Whittier. Illustrated.' Let me know what thee think of the verses when convenient. The poem will be difficult to illustrate. I know of no one who could do it, however, so well as Harry Fenn."

CHAPTER XII.

FRIENDS AND POEMS.

1868–1877.

The wave of popularity which lifted Whittier into prosperity never subsided, and henceforth he was free from pecuniary anxiety. The great stress of public affairs also had been removed, and though he never relaxed his great interest and never was without a part in the movements, political, philanthropic, and religious, which stirred society during the remainder of his life, his sensitive health forbade ardent participation, and there was no one great and abiding concern like the anti-slavery struggle to force him into activity. The tranquillity of the last third of his life was in marked contrast externally with the tumultuous middle period, but it was, after all, the outward sign of his inward peace.

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that gentleness was a necessity of his nature; it was in reality the result of resolute self-control, and the habitual government of a tempestuous spirit. He was quick and nervous in movement, but never otherwise than dignified and graceful. In conversation he spoke slowly and with precision, hesitating occasionally without the slightest nervousness for the word he wanted. This must have been the

result of his habit of self-restraint, which became his second nature. He religiously curbed his tongue, and said of himself that he was born without an atom of patience in his composition, but that he had tried to manufacture it as needed. To a dear friend of many years, with whom he had a misunderstanding that led to some sharp words, he wrote this characteristic explanation and apology: "Thee are right in thinking that I don't know much about what was said on the evening thee refer to. . . . If I remember rightly thee was unreasonably persistent in thy contention. When one is unreasonable himself, he is in no mood for tolerating the same thing in others. I dare say that I was a fool, but that is no reason thee should make thyself one, by dwelling on it. Lay it all to dyspepsia, Ben Butler, or anything else than intentional wrong on the part of thy old friend. We have known each other too long, and done each other too many kind offices, to let it disturb us."

The illness constantly wearing upon Mr. Whittier was believed by the physicians whom he consulted to be an affection of the heart, and he was warned to be exceedingly careful to avoid excitement.[1] The pain in the region of the heart was often severe. His headaches, more constant and nearly as painful, were more easily borne, as they did not seem dangerous. These attended him all his life, and accompanied every mental exertion. He could not write or read continuously for half

[1] During his residence in Philadelphia a noted physician examined him, and reported that there was no immediate cause for anxiety, — with care he might live to be fifty years of age.

an hour, in middle or later life, without severe pain in the head. This debarred him from lectures, receptions, and public dinners, unless an opportunity was given him to retire without notice, and without causing disturbance. A continuous mental strain of two hours was intolerable to him. This accounted for his frequent and adroitly managed disappearances during such festivities as those of his birthdays. This gave him a reputation for shyness that did not really belong to him. He was a man to enjoy society, and would have done his full part of the talking and listening in any company, but for the dread of the inevitable penalty. The more highly prized and interesting the guest he was entertaining, the greater the necessity of getting an occasional brief respite from his conversation. His intimate friends understood this, and would leave him to himself, at short intervals, and it was interesting to see the ingenuity with which he would escape from a bore, who did not appreciate or consider his infirmity. The trouble with his heart became less annoying in later years than in middle life. All his life he was seriously affected by his inability to secure sleep when it was most needed. When he met Charles Dickens, he told him that he read "Pickwick" to go to sleep by, and it was literally true. This kind of literature was improved by him as a soporific, because it was so thoroughly enjoyed that it banished the thoughts that kept him awake. The capacity for sleeping, he was wont to say, is the secret of the Englishman's power; as Emerson says, he puts a solid bar of sleep between two days.

He once said, "I inherited from my parents a nervous headache, and on account of it have never been able to do all I wished to do. [His interlocutor referred to the infirmities of St. Paul.] Paul's infirmities could not have been in his head, I think. He must have had a tough head; his writings do not indicate a weakness there. I have sometimes wondered, though it was not to be, of course, what the Christian Church would have become without Paul. It does not seem as if it would ever have gotten beyond the Jews."

Mr. Whittier had the misfortune to be color-blind, in respect to the shades of red and green. But he thought he had an unusual appreciation of the yellows, which fully compensated him for this defect. He saw no difference in color between a red apple and the leaves of the tree upon which it was growing. It was only the white or yellow rose that had for him any beauty except of form. He thought he enjoyed the splendors of an autumn landscape in a wooded country as much as the ordinary observer, especially if there was a fair admixture of yellow foliage. When he brought home bouquets of leaves, it was noticeable that the yellow greatly predominated. Perhaps his preference for the goldenrod as the national flower was partly due to its color. His mother discovered this optical defect when, a little boy, he was picking wild strawberries. He could see no difference between the color of the berry and the leaf. "I have always thought the rainbow *beautiful*," he once said with an amused smile, "but they tell me I have never seen it. Its only color to me is yel-

low." A reddish brown book was handed him, on the cover of which were lines of bright scarlet, and he was asked to tell the colors as he saw them. He thought the book was a dark yellow, and the scarlet lines stood out to him as bright yellow. Dr. Jeffries, an authority in color-blindness, says that Mr. Whittier was a typical specimen of the infirmity, and further, that the little woodcut portrait of him, published in Houghton, Mifflin & Co.'s book catalogue, is the best picture he has ever seen of the characteristic look of the color-blind.

After he had passed middle life, his right ear lost its sensitiveness, and he became partially deaf. A severe cold would occasionally make it difficult for him to understand what was said by voices which were not familiar to him. But a familiar voice did not need to be much raised above its natural pitch in conversation. This dullness of hearing was not considered by him an unmixed evil, as in many ways it shielded him from annoyance. Sometimes his deafness afforded excuse for misunderstanding, or not replying to questions which he did not care to answer. Even when he had comparatively good hearing, he was not a good listener to a prolonged address. This antipathy to long readings is graphically set forth in his poem "The Demon of the Study." He once said that he did not care to listen to a discourse from any one but St. Paul; and after one hour of even his preaching he should want an opportunity to leave.

Mr. Whittier's laugh was peculiar. He uttered no sound, but his face and gestures showed his

amusement most expressively. If much moved, he bent forward, and smote his knee. Of his smile a writer says: "It is one of the sweetest smiles ever seen on the face of a man. It seems almost to be made of veritable lights and shadows. In repose his face is almost stern, but when anything amuses him you see a light dance for an instant in his eyes, and then seem slowly to expand over his face as a circling wave expands upon the surface of a placid pool. There is an appreciable time between the smile's appearance in his eyes and the slow parting of his lips, and there is something remarkably gentle in it all. He smiles frequently too, for he is always awake to the humorous side of things, and you cannot entertain him in any way more certainly than by telling him bright, witty stories. He catches the point instantly and eagerly. But the wit must be of a quiet order, — no roystering for him!"

A marked trait in the character of Mr. Whittier was the warmth and steadiness of his affection for his friends, and his tender solicitude for their health and comfort. His many years of anxious care for his invalid mother and sister had the effect to make him observant of symptoms of illness among his relatives and friends. The invalidism of people with whom he was unacquainted, when it came under his notice, touched his heart, and he was anxious to be helpful to them in word and deed. The appeals for aid which came to him in his letters from strangers were sure of response if illness was found in combination with poverty.

The following incident illustrates Mr. Whittier's kindness and consideration for those employed by him as servants. His washerwoman, Mrs. Choate, by industry and thrift had been enabled to build for her family a comfortable house. When it was ready for occupancy, there was a house-warming attended by all the neighbors, who brought substantial tokens of their good will, including all the furniture needed in her new parlor. Mr. Whittier's hand was to be seen in the whole movement; he was present at the festivity, and made a little speech congratulating Mrs. Choate upon her well-deserved success in life, and said he would read a piece of machine poetry which had been intrusted to him for the occasion. These are the lines, which were of course of his own composition: —

"Of rights and of wrongs
Let the feminine tongues
Talk on — none forbid it.
Our hostess best knew
What her hands found to do,
Asked no questions, but DID IT.

"Here the lesson of work,
Which so many folks shirk,
Is so plain all may learn it;
Each brick in this dwelling,
Each timber is telling,
If you want a home, EARN IT.

"The question of labor
Is solved by our neighbor,
The old riddle guessed out:
The wisdom sore needed,
The truth long unheeded,
Her flat-iron's pressed out!

"Thanks, then, to Kate Choate!
Let the idle take note
What their fingers were made for;
She, cheerful and jolly,
Worked on late and early,
And bought — what she paid for!

"Never vainly repining,
Nor begging, nor whining;
The morning-star twinkles
On no heart that 's lighter
As she makes the world whiter
And smooths out its wrinkles.

"So, long life to Kate!
May her heirs have to wait
Till they 're gray in attendance;
And her flat-iron press on,
Still teaching its lesson
Of brave independence!"

Whenever any neighbor died who had showed marked characteristics and singular individuality, no matter what his station in life, Mr. Whittier used to send his estimate of him to the village paper. Here is a small portion of his notice of a poor and aged Englishman, James Standring, who died in December, 1869: —

"He was a man not to be overlooked or ignored in any community. He was always comparatively a poor man, earning his daily bread by constant toil; he had little or no learning, and there was nothing conciliatory or prepossessing in his appearance or manners. Sturdily independent, he exercised the fullest freedom of speech; flattered nobody; and would have burned like a candle for opinion's sake had it been necessary. He had no disguise or reticence — his few faults

and his many virtues were open as the day. His distinguishing trait, that which made him a marked man in a community which has deservedly a reputation for liberality, was his abounding generosity. None who was poor, none who suffered whether providentially or from his own folly and crime, ever appealed to him in vain. After exhausting his own slender means, he had no hesitation in levying contributions upon his neighbors. He took the first man he met by the button, told the story of the want and suffering he had witnessed, and if he did not obtain assistance, he at least made refusal impossible without an uneasy conscience, and a sense of meanness on the part of the refuser."

There were several aged and indigent people in Amesbury over whom Mr. Whittier exercised a watchful care, helping with tender sympathy and judicious advice, and, when there was need, with money, tendered in a most delicate way. He called upon these friends more regularly than upon any others in the village, and even in his later years, when his infirmities were a sufficient excuse for not making his usual calls, he would not neglect these dependent neighbors. For one of them, who died a few years ago at the age of ninety-five, he planned a surprise party in 1870, and gave this account of it in a letter to his niece, who was then teaching a school for freedmen in Charleston, S. C. : —

"We had a grand surprise party at Uncle S——'s, — fifty present. H. C. and J. H. spoke, and J. W. C. presented in behalf of the company

a purse of $130. Several persons sent money, and messages, which I read on the occasion, and I took the liberty to put in some money and good wishes from thee, as I knew thee would like to do it. Don't let Uncle S—— know that thee did not know of it, as I should have written thee if there had been time. It was a very lively and merry occasion."

The village paper said of this occasion: "A vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Whittier as the originator of the party, but that gentleman begged leave to disclaim all merit in the matter: — it was not his nor anybody's doing, — it grew out of its own fitness, — it made itself and came there of its own accord. 'Auld Lang Syne' was sung, and the party left at an early hour. The occasion will long be remembered as one of unusual social interest and enjoyment."

Among Mr. Whittier's neighbors was an aged pair, a brother and sister, whose simple, old-fashioned ways and quaint conversation he much enjoyed. He thought they worked harder than was necessary, as the infirmities of age fell upon them, for they had accumulated a competency, and on one occasion he suggested that they leave for younger hands some of the labor to which they had been accustomed. But the sister said, "We must lay by something for our last sickness, and have money enough left to bury us." Mr. Whittier replied, "Did thee ever know any one to stick by the way for want of funds?"

There were rumors in the village that an aged citizen was soon to be married, and that the matter

was to be kept secret until after the ceremony. Nobody could get at the truth of the rumor, however. One evening he called at Mr. Whittier's while a merry party in the "garden room" were discussing the affair. As Mr. Whittier started to meet his guest, he said to the party he was leaving, "I will find out about it." A committee was appointed to stand by the parlor door and ascertain how he would broach the subject. He began with the remark, "I hear thee are going to Boston," and followed it up with, "Washington would be a good place for a trip in the winter." This leading no whither, he finally ventured to remark, "I hear thee are going to do the best thing for thyself." This time he was successful, and his aged friend received his hearty congratulations.

Rev. S. H. Emery, of Quincy, Ill., a friend of Whittier's childhood, visited him in 1868, and together they recalled the scenes of their youth. Whittier was touched by the allusions of his friend to his Western home, where a wife, children, and a grandchild, Constance, awaited his return. Being asked for his autograph, he gave these lines: —

"The years that since we met have flown
Leave as they found me, still alone:
No wife, nor child, nor grandchild dear,
Are mine the heart of age to cheer.
More favored thou, with hair less gray
Than mine, canst let thy fancy stray
To where thy little Constance sees
The prairie ripple in the breeze;
For one like her to lisp thy name
Is better than the voice of fame."

For several years only short notes passed be-

tween Senator Sumner and the invalid poet. On the 6th of March, 1870, Mr. Sumner wrote from the Senate Chamber: —

My Dear Whittier, — The inclosed verses by you I find in a commonplace book of mine;[1] but not in any collection of your poems. As I wish to use them, will you kindly tell me where I shall find them? When were they written? Are they alone, or was there a context? Perhaps they were in an album. I hope you will let me know soon. Are they correct in form? I ask this, because the printers sometimes make a text unlike the original. I wish you could have seen Revels hold up his hand and enter upon his senatorship.

Whittier's reply was as follows: "It is good to see thy handwriting once more. The lines quoted are mine. I think they were originally written in an album or commonplace book. I think they are correct in form. That swearing-in of Revels must have been a sight compensating for much of the labor, trial, and obloquy which thee and other pioneers in the march of liberty have endured. I was with you in spirit. I read all thy words. I was especially delighted with thy remarks on the death of Lincoln and Fessenden. Viewed in connection with the circumstances,

[1] The lines inclosed were, —

"Believe me still, as I have ever been,
The steadfast lover of my fellow-men;
My weakness, love of holy liberty;
My crime, the wish that all mankind were free!
Free, not by blood; redeemed, but not by crime;
Each fetter broken, but in God's own time."

Whittier.

I know of nothing finer, truer, and more magnanimous. It is such things that bring thee near to the hearts of the people. . . . Senator Wilson is doing well with his papers in the 'Independent.' I think he will make a valuable and readable history of the great struggle in which he has borne so honorable a part. God bless thee always!"

TO LUCY LARCOM.

3d mo., 1870.

. . . . .

Pray give the "Atlantic"
A brief unpedantic
Review of Miss Phelps' book,
Which teaches and helps folk
To deal with the offenders
In love which surrenders
All pride unforgiving,
The lost one receiving
With truthful believing
That she like all others,
Our sisters and brothers,
Is only a sinner
Whom God's love within her
Can change to the whiteness
Of heaven's own brightness.
For who shall see tarnish
If He sweep and garnish?
When He is the cleanser
Shall *we* dare to censure?
Say to Fields, if he ask of it,
I can't take the task of it.

. . . . .

P. S. — For myself, if I 'm able,
And half comfortable,
I shall run for the seashore
To some place as before,
Where blunt we at least find
The teeth of the East wind,
And spring does not tarry
As it does at Amesbury;
But where it will be to
I cannot yet see to.

TO CELIA THAXTER.

3d mo., 5, 1870.

I am glad to learn that thee are making thyself happy in making others so. Probably there is no other way. My happiness has pretty much come in that manner, and my unhappiness from the selfish pursuit of enjoyment to the neglect of duty. . . . The other evening I went into a confectioner's shop in Amesbury, and the man and his wife immediately questioned me as to the author of the articles on the Shoals. They said they had lived down East among the islands on the Maine coast, and they had never seen the sky and sea and the seafaring people so well described. "Why," said the man, "they made me feel as if I was a boy again, rocking in my boat, or climbing the bluffs of Orr's Island and Matinicus." His wife said she had always felt there was poetry in that island life, but nobody before had written it out. So I told them something about thee, to their great delight. . . . How many good and nice people there are in the world! People too of whom we know nothing, and who know nothing of us.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

6th mo., 13, 1870.

I know thee must be greatly pained by the sad news of the death of Charles Dickens. Is it possible that that wonderful creative life is now but a memory? That that marvelous hand has forever lost its cunning? So they pass away — the great and good ones, who made themselves so dear and necessary to us! Where are they? What are they?

Shall we who are following them into the darkness and silence ever meet them again? Thee and thy husband, who have had the privilege of calling him friend, have at least the satisfaction of knowing that his earthly life was made happier by your kindness and love. What a brief and sad life this of ours would be, if it did not include the possibilities of a love which takes hold of eternity!

In the spring of 1870, Mr. Whittier spent some weeks in Brooklyn and New York, as the guest of his friend, Colonel Julian Allen, a brave Pole, who commanded a New York regiment in our civil war, and whose wife was a relative of Mr. Whittier's. Upon his return, on the 10th of June, he wrote to Mrs. Thaxter: —

"I ought to have told thee before how welcome were thy letters, but I have been in Babylon for some weeks, and have had to see and talk to so many people that I am very weary, and have not yet been able to attend to my letters. I must tell thee that many people speak of thy 'Shoals' paper in strong terms of admiration, poor Alice Cary — who is very ill[1] — and her sister, among others. One day when I sat by her bedside, Horace Greeley came in. He spoke of Boston writers and magazines, and then said in his slow Yankee drawl: 'Well, the best prose writing I have seen for a long time is Mrs. Thaxter's "Isles of Shoals" in the "Atlantic." Her pen-pictures

[1] She died February 12, 1871. This visit is referred to in the poem *The Singer*, in which Horace Greeley is called "our later Franklin."

are wonderfully well done.' Now that I call praise worth having."

TO CELIA THAXTER.

7th mo., 28, 1870.

Be thankful for sea-surrounded Appledore! We are literally baking alive here. . . . I spent the night like a wandering ghost, going from room to room, trying sofa and floors, and getting no sleep out of them. We have had a splendid day-break, but there is now a fierce menace of heat, and *not* "tenderly the haughty day fills its blue urn with fire." Over Po Hill the sky looks cool and hard, refreshing to eye and spirit, and the two great rustic baskets full of bloom and greenery, with their fresh luxuriance, make a pleasant contrast to the hot street and the dusty trees and shrubbery in the front yard. My little room is quiet enough. Lizzie is at Seabrook, and I am all alone. The sweet calm face of the pagan philosopher and emperor, Marcus Antoninus, looks down upon me on one hand, and on the other the bold, generous, and humane countenance of the Christian man of action, Henry Ward Beecher; and I sit between them as a sort of compromise. It is very still — the leaves move softly without sound; I can hear my own thoughts. . . . How I thank thee for thy letter just received, bringing me the sweet breath of wild rose and mignonette. It is as if the cool sea air of the islands blew over this feverish inland, and I bathe my hot, aching brow for a moment in the dream of a milder atmosphere. Pilgrims come and go, as usual, and now and then

old friends. Mrs. Pitman spent most of two days with me, and Lucy Larcom one. An old bachelor friend came to tell me of his newly resumed hopes of matrimony. It was very droll.

TO THE SAME.

AMESBURY, 8th mo., 1870.

I wish thee could see my pears and apples. The trees are bowed to earth with fruit. I wish I could send some of our wild flowers. The ground-nut vine especially, with its rare sweet fragrance; suggestive of, but more delicate than the heliotrope. It seems to me that as I grow older these beautiful works of God are more dear to me. Perhaps a sense of insecurity in their possession — the transitoriness of all that our senses take cognizance of — intensates the love I feel for them. Well, I hope the Hereafter will not lack something to remind us of the beautiful earth-life — beautiful despite its sin and sorrow.

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

22d 9th mo., 1870.

I thank thee for thy offer of the Florida cottage, but I am quite unable to take advantage of it. I must live if I can, and die if I must, in Yankee land. . . . The foundations seem breaking up. I only hope that if the planks and stagings of human device give way, we shall find the Eternal Rock beneath. We can do without Bible or church; we cannot do without God; and of Him we are sure. All that science and criticism can urge cannot shake the self-evident truth that He

asks me to be true, just, merciful, and loving, and because He asks me to be so, I know that He is Himself what He requires of me.

We first hear of the poem "Miriam" in the summer of 1870, when Whittier sent the manuscript of it to Fields with this note: "I send thee a long poem, Oriental, and purely fiction, though consistent with the character of Akba and his Christian wife. I hope thee and dear Mrs. F. will like it. Pray let me hear from you about it." Fields recommended its publication with other poems, in a volume to be issued at once. Mr. Whittier made a list of the poems to accompany it, with a computation of the number of pages each would fill, and sent it with this note: "I think this is all (although I am not quite sure) and that I have computed the number of pages correctly. But until I see 'Miriam' again, amended and improved, I cannot decide about a new volume. What 's the use of it, anyhow? 'Of the making of many books' there ought to be an end some time. Let me see 'Miriam' in type, and if she finds favor in my eyes, I will let thee know as soon as possible."

In October he wrote: "I send a dedication to my old friend, Fred Barnard, LL. D., President of Columbia College, New York, who used to rhyme with me during my sojourn at Hartford, nearly forty years ago. I think it will please him. . . . Is it necessary to have a full-page illustration for my little book? I rather shrink from seeing a pretty woman's face on my sober page, as thee suggested. It would be quite out of keeping."

Fields suggested a change in the second line of the dedication: "Under the Charter Oak, our horoscope," which grated on his ear, but Whittier replied to this: "I do not see how I can make a change in the second line. I can't destroy the Charter Oak before its time. It 's lucky that other folks' ears are not so sensitive as thine; and yet I feel the force of thy suggestion."

In several letters written about 1870, Mr. Whittier spoke of an intended volume with the title of "Indian Summer." At one time he was about ready to have it announced as forthcoming, but at the last moment wrote to his publishers to let the matter drop. It was probably to be a collection of poems, to be named for one he never completed, unless perhaps "St. Martin's Summer" was then in his mind.

In 1870, Lewis Tappan was engaged in preparing the memorial of his philanthropic brother, Arthur Tappan, and called upon Mr. Whittier for some word in regard to his old friend. He sent these lines (from his poem on Daniel Neall), which were printed on the title-page of the work: —

> "His daily life, far better understood
> In deeds than words, was simply doing good;
> So calm, so constant was his rectitude
> That by his loss alone we know his worth,
> And feel how true a man has walked with us on earth."

In a note which accompanied the lines, written in Brooklyn, May 2, 1870, he says: "It seems to me that this will well express the character of thy excellent brother. I shall be glad to have my name in this way associated with his and thy own. . . .

My pamphlet on 'Justice and Expediency' was published in the early summer of 1833. I printed only five hundred copies. I sent one to thy brother and soon received from him a very kind letter. He had five thousand copies printed at his expense. In the very early days of the anti-slavery cause thy brother's sympathy and liberality were the main dependence of the zealous but poor young men who engaged in it. We all remember him with gratitude. When Garrison was imprisoned, I appealed to Henry Clay to use his influence with his Baltimore friends in his behalf, and he wrote me that he intended to have assisted him through Niles of the 'Register,' but had been anticipated by Mr. Tappan. I shall look for the book with much interest."

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

2d mo., 16, 1871.

Without the gift of clairvoyance how was I to know thy whereabouts? I trusted to my impressions, as a Quaker should, — or rather, as I wanted to see thee in Amesbury, "the wish was father to the thought," — that thee was at home. Had thee been, I dare say thee would n't have heeded my invitation, and so it is just as well thee are in Washington enjoying thyself.

"If she be not here for me,
What care I where she be?"

I am a little fearful that after all this intimacy with Excellencies and Honorables, and Mrs. Judge This or General That, thee will set thyself quite above thy plebeian friends at home.

I am not sure what effect it would have on me. But the last time I was in Boston, like Burns I "dinnered wi' a lord," and yet on leaving his lordship if I had met thee in the street I think I should have civilly nodded at least. I will lend thee all the aid I can in the matter of curtains and paint, but as I don't know red from green, I suspect my judgment in such nice matters. When thee returns, come up and see *my* improvements. I have finished off a sky-parlor in the attic very cosily, and I have a new carpet on the parlor, and divers other changes for worse or better; and I have lots of nice books and pictures — and my own hearty welcome for thee. My dear old friend of long time, Alice Cary, is dead — and I am sorry and glad — glad for her sake. Ah me! at the autumn time of threescore how the leaves of life fall around one!

I see in the "Independent" that a Western parsoness made an attempt to interview thee, in the cars. It seems that she had it all to herself, as she got never a word from thee, only "Say on, dear!" Thee should be thankful that she did n't put words in thy mouth as they often do in mine, and so make me responsible for their own platitudes. I am hoping against hope to hear of the "Tennessee." Dr. Howe and Fred Douglass are worth more to the United States than a dozen St. Domingoes. Tell Mr. Blaine I don't envy him his position as keeper of the great Washington menagerie — I take it the "specimen" we have sent him from our District[1] don't need "stirring up" to make him show himself!

[1] General Butler.

On the 21st of March, 1871, Whittier wrote to Sumner: "It really seems to me that Congress should not leave Washington without doing something to afford protection to the Union men of the South from Ku Klux outrages. I think, too, it would be best now to make amnesty complete, for the old officers, and thus take away a pretext for a disturbance, the sufferings of which fall upon the colored people. Having gone so far in our leniency, it seems to me useless to make any exceptions. Let us begin anew, and punish if need be all new offenses, but waive the past. Our real difficulty at the present time is that we have to deal with States. Had thy advice prevailed we should have been spared a vast amount of trouble."

TO BAYARD TAYLOR.

4th mo., 19, 1871.

I am sorry to hear of your leaving Pennsylvania, but I am not sure but that it will be better. I feel myself the need of coming into nearer relations to the great life of our centres of civilization and thought, and if I were younger and stronger I should certainly spend my winters in Boston.

GAIL HAMILTON TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

June 1, 1871.

The Scripture teacheth us at all times to be willing to give up our own plans and adopt those of other people at a moment's notice. Now I don't quite dare go over to Amesbury Saturday, because I have so many artificers in carpets, curtains, paint-pots, white pines, dead hemlocks and other small

deer, that I am afraid to leave them; but what I do want — what I have set my heart on — what I will not be refused is to have you come over to Ashantee and spend Sunday with me. You have no excuse for not coming, because you show by asking me that you have no engagement, and if you will come, I will certainly go over in a week or two and make you a visit — if you want me to.

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

7th 6th mo., 1871.

I was sorry not to see thee at Amesbury, and should have been only too glad to have spent First day with thee in the midst of thy palatial splendors, but the terrible heat of Seventh day was too much for me. I wonder what thee are doing in the way of building and gardening. I thought thy place all complete when I last saw it. I am afraid it will be so grand and pleasant that thee will have no disposition to visit my humble domicile. I want to go to Newport, to the Yearly Meeting, mainly on Lizzie's account, as she has never been there. If I am able, we shall go next Seventh day. I wonder whether thee really expected me or wished me to come last week. I was not sure whether it was earnest or play of words. But if I had been able, I think I should have taken thee at thy word. I have many things to talk about, many things to show thee, and I live in the hope of seeing thee under thy roof before long. I want to talk with thee on thy articles in the "Independent," and on the subject of woman's rights, labor, etc. I like thy views gener-

ally, but I fear we should quarrel a little on some points. I regard thee as about the wisest of women, but nevertheless venture to dissent now and then, perhaps rather to the manner of saying an unpalatable truth, than to the truth itself, which of course is right.

In 1871, Mr. Whittier edited "John Woolman's Journal," revealing to a new generation, and to people who had not before heard of this New Jersey saint and reformer, the beauties of his style, and the importance of his testimonies against the evils of his age. The delicacy and natural refinement of the unlettered Quaker made an impression upon the literature as well as the religion and philanthropy of his time, and Whittier did a good service in bringing his writings again before the public.

In the same year he edited a choice selection of juvenile poems by various authors, with the title of "Child-Life: A Collection of Poems," in which he had the assistance of Lucy Larcom. The purpose of the editors in this, as in the companion volume "Child-Life in Prose," issued two years later, was to make volumes which should not offend the cultivated tastes of parents, while amusing their children.

At the time this work was being compiled, some one sent Miss Larcom, in manuscript, a poem entitled "Jack in the Pulpit," but there was no indication as to its authorship. She sent it to Mr. Whittier, who was pleased with it, but thought he could improve it. He wrote to Miss Larcom,

April 20, 1871: "I send 'Jack' in a new dress. Whose is it?[1] The conception is so fine, some of its verses so good, that I have been tinkering on it, to get it into readable and printable shape."

In November, 1871, he wrote to Miss Larcom: "I 've got the sheets of our 'Child-Life,' and like the thing hugely. But I think now I shall take the credit of it all to myself. If it had not looked nice and good, I should have shirked it, and left all on thy shoulders. . . . I have been putting Yankee words to Christian Winter's ballad of 'Herr Volmer and Elsie.' A Danish friend has sent me what he calls a literal prose translation, and I have made a nice thing of it — omitting one or two things not in keeping."

After Sumner's speech of January 15, 1872, in favor of his civil rights bill, Mr. Whittier wrote: "Thank thee for thy noble speech! Some of our politicians are half afraid of it, but, depend upon it, the heart of Massachusetts is with thee. Amnesty for rebels and a guarantee of safety for freedmen should go together."

"The Pennsylvania Pilgrim, and Other Poems" was published in 1872. On the 24th of May, Mr. Whittier wrote to James R. Osgood: "I am half inclined to think it would be best to print my poem, a part of which I showed thee, in

[1] He did not find out in regard to the authorship before the volume was published, and the poem appeared anonymously. He afterward learned that Miss Carrie Smith, of West Medford, wrote the verses he had been "tinkering," and gave her credit for her work in subsequent editions, and also in letters to several newspapers. He followed the general plan of the original, but made many material changes.

a volume by itself. It contains about five hundred lines, divided into verses of three lines, and with the introduction and notes will make nearly fifty pages, or about the size of 'Snow-Bound.' I have added a good deal to it and, I think, made it a better poem. I think honestly it is as good as (if not better than) any long poem I have written. But if thee prefer to print a larger volume, including my shorter poems, I will not insist. I shall call it 'The Germantown Pilgrim.' It is now ready for the press save the addition of a few notes." The principal poem[1] in this collection tells the pleasant, quiet story of the learned and pious German, Pastorius, who in 1683, at the invitation of William Penn, brought a colony of his countrymen to Pennsylvania, and planted it near Philadelphia, his township including what is now the beautiful suburb of Germantown. He joined the Society of Friends soon after his arrival, and was the author of the first protest made by any religious body against slavery.

Among the dozen poems bound up with "The Pennsylvania Pilgrim," were "The Pageant," "Marguerite," "My Birthday," and "King Volmer and Elsie." W. S. Kennedy, in his "Life of Whittier," says the last-named poem is a paraphrase of the Howitts' translation of "Henrik and

[1] Sixteen stanzas of this poem, descriptive of the "Quaker Meeting," were published in the *Independent*, in June, 1872. In a note to Osgood, written in May, Whittier says: "Fields thinks it would be better to entitle it 'Pastorius of Pennsylvania.' I am not sure about it. He objects to the word 'Germantown.' We might call it 'The Pennsylvania Pilgrim,' a rather pleasant sounding alliteration."

Else"; but Mr. Whittier never saw the poetical translation by the Howitts.

Upon receipt of "The Pennsylvania Pilgrim," Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote to Mr. Whittier: "I have never thanked you for the kind welcome home you sent me under the best form of the book of poems, which we presently found time to read through, — my wife and daughters assisting. I confess to the frivolity of liking 'King Volmer and Elsie' the best, if only because the reader's voice broke suddenly at the summit of the story. But we will talk of this and much more, if you will in your lifetime come to Concord, as you once promised to do. My dame will not forget it, nor will let me if I could. Now, a week from to-morrow is the meeting of the Saturday Club, which you might honor oftener than you do. I pray you to come and spend Friday with us, and we will carry you down to the Club on Saturday."

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

3d mo., 1st, 1872.

It was good in thee to send me thy new book. I had read most of it before in the "Independent." But a second perusal in fair type has been none the less satisfactory. It is one of thy very ablest books — shorn of some of the redundant wealth of diction which some reviewers complained of in thy first publications, but lacking none of their vigor and life and insight. I quarreled with thee often as I read, but, after all, laid the book down with a most profound respect for the wise little woman who wrote it. I shall not put my quarrels on

paper, but when a kind Providence gives me an opportunity I shall "withstand thee to thy face." I will simply say that my old bachelor reverence for woman has been somewhat disturbed by thy revelations. *I* am not going to condemn her because thee turn State's evidence against her. Voter, or non-voter, I have faith in her. Mrs. G. gave me the history of thy shawl hunt in Boston. I shall not waste my sage advice on thee any more. I don't see but thee are just as much given to worldly vanities as if thee had never had the benefit of a Quaker's counsels and example.

TO CELIA THAXTER.

5th mo., 1872.

To-morrow our Quarterly Meeting commences, and our house will be filled with "Friends." I have got two turkeys, and beef, and tongue, to *meat* the exigency; and Lizzie is making cake for lunch before meeting. . . . I see in Fields's "Yesterdays with Authors" that Dickens speaks highly of thy prose articles in the "Atlantic," but declares he don't believe it: "No, I don't. My conviction is that these Islanders must be dreadfully bored with their islands." I wish he could have seen them as we have. . . . I have a poem of length written last winter, "The Germantown Pilgrim," a Quaker story of the old times, which I like. It is as long as "Snow-Bound," and better, but nobody will find it out. . . . Is n't it droll that thy only vulnerable point, in the estimation of critics, is thy goodness! Too much piety! Solomon has a word of advice to such folks as are

"too good
For human nature's daily food."

"Be not righteous overmuch: why shouldst thou destroy thyself?" But soberly, I think it is all nonsense — this objection to some of thy verses. Such nice folks as Joseph and Gertrude Cartland like them for the very thing complained of, and so do I, who am not nice.

Sumner became active in his opposition to some features of the policy of President Grant's administration. He made a speech in the Senate, May 31, 1872, severely denouncing the administration of President Grant, and opposing his reëlection. He felt sure this speech would give pain to his friend Whittier, and to him he wrote a letter of explanation. This is Whittier's reply, dated June 12: "I needed no assurance on thy part that thy speech was an honest one, and inspired by a sense of duty. And yet I am sorry for some parts of it, as I think its effect would have been better if it had been less severe. I inclose a note to the 'Transcript.' I think already a reaction has commenced, and many who denounced the speech strongly now feel that, after all, the charges it makes have not been disproved. Indeed, I have not much doubt that, if thy election as Senator were pending in Massachusetts at this very time, there would be a majority in thy favor; for I presume the great body of the Democrats would sustain thee, and the old Liberty party men are not all gone over by any means."

The letter of Whittier's to the "Transcript,"

referred to above, appeared in the issue of June 6, 1872: "As regards the senior Senator of Massachusetts I have no change of opinion to record. I have not forgotten his long and brilliant services in the cause of freedom and the best interests of his country and mankind. I know him well. I have stood side by side with him for thirty years, and it requires something more than a mistake on his part to make me desert an old friend. I confess that I have seen with some impatience men, whose Republicanism seems mainly to consist in their readiness to grasp the spoils of a victory won in a great measure by others, maligning, insulting, and displacing a man whose integrity, intellect, and acquirements are a standing reproach to themselves. I am no blind advocate of Senator Sumner, or any other man. I expect to see faults and frailties, and to grieve over the mistakes of those I love and respect. I regret the late speech, as it exposes the author to the charge of personal resentment, and because it seems to me unduly severe in its tone and temper. The Republicans of Massachusetts may, and probably will, dissent from its conclusions, through the press and at the ballot-box, but they have no occasion to question his sincerity or to charge him with abandoning any of the great principles which he has so nobly assisted, and for which he has suffered more than martyrdom."

During the presidential campaign of 1872, Horace Greeley, nominated by the party he had all his life antagonized, was treated with scant courtesy by former friends. Whittier deprecated the personal abuse showered upon his old friend, and in

a letter published in the "Springfield Republican" said: "The poor attempts to ridicule him, and to underrate his eminent ability at the present time, on the part of some of our Republican papers, are best answered by the eulogiums bestowed upon him in their own columns heretofore. He can well afford to smile at the feeble arrows of sarcasm which are expended on his white great coat, and fail to reach the man beneath it. . . . I have no wish, as I have no reason, to withhold my good opinion of my old friend, at a time when so many Republicans deem it advisable as a party expedient to assail him personally as well as politically."

In a letter to Rev. Dr. E. H. Chapin, on the occasion of Mr. Greeley's death, Whittier wrote of his friendship of thirty years, and added: "All that time I have known him as the educator of a people in liberty, temperance, integrity, economy, and industry, vigorously taking the side of the poor, enslaved, or suffering of every color and nationality. When I heard of his death, there mingled with my grief a feeling of gratitude, that I had been preserved from saying one word which could add bitterness to his life; that I had none of the late remorse over the dead for unkindness to the living, which is one of the saddest burdens of humanity."

On the 13th of August, 1872, Mr. Whittier's house in Amesbury was struck by lightning. When the shower came up, he was in the "garden room," while his nieces were in the little sewing-room on the opposite side of the house. He was on his way to suggest to them the propriety of leaving their work, and not sitting by the win-

dows, when the bolt descended. He fell to the floor and was for a short time insensible; both the ladies were also stunned. They all recovered their senses about the same time, but when they talked found themselves deaf. The deafness soon passed away, and the only lasting effect was a dread of thunder-showers from which Mr. Whittier never recovered. Up to this time the house had been "protected" by lightning-rods; Mr. Whittier had these at once removed, and would have no others in their place, although lightning-rod men were persistent in their attentions. One agent, provoked at his lack of success in getting an order from the poet, took revenge by causing a handbill to be printed on which appeared a picture of Mr. Whittier's house with a thunderbolt descending upon it, and a statement that this was what might be expected to happen to houses, the owners of which obstinately refuse to adopt the only sure method of protection! The damage to the house was slight; a beam was found split in the attic, a mirror was broken, and a window shade was burned in the sewing-room.

TO HARRIET MCEWEN KIMBALL.

8th mo., 30, 1872.

I thank thee for thy kind note of the 20th. We had what ought to be regarded as a narrow escape. I was struck down by lightning, and my two nieces stunned. I suffered considerable pain in my head and along the spine, for a day or two, but am now much as before. Our house was not materially damaged.

Sumner's proposition, in 1872, that the colors of the national regiments should not bear the names of battles of the civil war in which they had been carried, was not at first well received at the North. The Massachusetts legislature, then in extra session, voted in the first heat of irritation to censure their Senator for this magnanimous concession to the feelings of a conquered section of the country that had returned to its allegiance. Whittier was greatly annoyed by this hasty action of the legislature, and set about creating a public sentiment that would force the next legislature to expunge the vote of censure. He wrote to Sumner: "I write just to tell thee not to believe for a moment that the *people* of Massachusetts have any sympathy with the 'resolution' adopted by a dead legislature galvanized into life by the governor's proclamation for a special purpose. Not a single respectable paper of any party has, to my knowledge, indorsed it. It is *deader* than the legislature itself. I have yet to see the first man or woman who speaks in its favor. Depend upon it, the heart of the old Commonwealth is sound and generous and turns towards thee with its old love and gratitude. She has learned to value pure-handed public servants. Dear friend of many years, be assured and hopeful. All is safe. God bless thee and have thee ever in his holy keeping."

A fortnight afterward he wrote on the same subject, after mentioning a report he had received of Sumner's failing health: "I hope thee will not make an effort to speak this term. The country is coming out all right as to thy 'flag'

resolution. The pitiful folly of our late legislature is already repented of. Believe me, thee never stood higher with the best people of all parties in the State. Amidst the miserable muddle of the Credit Mobilier it is something to be proud of that the smell of fire has not been upon thy garments."

A month later, Whittier reports a hearing before a committee at the State House, in the matter of the petitions he had been industriously circulating for signatures among the best men of all parties. He says: "I have just got back from the hearing of the petitioners for rescinding the vote of the extra session of the legislature. The great Green Room was packed full of the noblest men and women of Boston and the State. Governor Claflin opened the matter in a brief but admirable speech, and was followed by ex-Governor Washburn, in a long and eloquent argument and appeal. James Freeman Clarke followed, earnest and able, and John C. Park had the floor when I left, making one of his best speeches. The hall rang with applause of the various speakers. The whole thing was well done, and I hope for the best results. The reports of the speeches will reach thee as soon as this, but I could not refrain from dropping a line. Governor Claflin has worked most actively and efficiently in the matter."

In his effort to secure the rescinding of the resolution of censure of Charles Sumner, after writing to all his personal friends among the public men of the State, Mr. Whittier asked the help of statesmen, jurists, and editors in other States. To Hon.

William Claflin he wrote: "The great and general court have acted like fools, and worse, in denouncing Charles Sumner. I begin to hate parties and politics! I have sent to Hon. Willard P. Phillips, our representative, a draft of a petition for rescinding the odious resolution passed by the late extra session in censure of Charles Sumner. I make the movement not merely for Sumner's sake, but for the sake of the honor and goodness of our dear old Commonwealth. Sumner's fame is beyond its reach, but we cannot afford the disgrace on our records. I have not found one intelligent and respectable man who approved of that resolution."

Hon. Willard P. Phillips, of Salem, who was most active in promoting the expunging of the resolution, kept Mr. Whittier informed of the progress of the bill in the House. On the 14th of March, 1873, he wrote: "I have received several of your letters with inclosures, and thank you for them. The letters of Governor Noyes [of Ohio] and W. C. Bryant I have sent to the 'Advertiser' to print to-morrow, for which I trust I have your authority. Had I been compelled to speak to-day I would have read Judge Russell's letter, but now, as I shall not speak until Monday, I ask your authority to do so. . . . The committee have reported against us, on account of the miserable quibble as to the power of the legislature to rescind or amend a *resolution*, which in legislative technicality is simply an expression of opinion. This technicality will kill the rescinding in the House, and we shall go out before the people defeated in the legislature, but appealing to them,

and the appeal will not be in vain. The petitions and responses we have received are only a small specimen of what we shall have before we get through. The abuse of Sumner brings back to my mind the abuse of the Senator by the old Whig party, 'the lords of the loom and the last,' and the response of the people now begins to resemble the responses of the people in former times."

The effort was not successful in the legislature of 1873. Hon. Willard P. Phillips wrote to Mr. Whittier on the 20th of March: "The deed was done yesterday. It is as we feared, but the whole thing will help Mr. Sumner. What a triumph for him to be indorsed by such names as were on the petitions! Of what consequence now is the vote of the legislature?" But Mr. Whittier did not let the matter drop. He brought it before the next legislature, which by large majorities, in both houses, annulled the resolutions of censure. The last letter he wrote to Sumner was to announce the success of his persistent effort. It was received not long before Sumner's death, and gladdened the last days of the dying statesman. It was in these words: "The record of the Bay State is now clear. The folly of the extra session of 1872 is wiped out. I am especially pleased, as, like Senator Benton on a former occasion, 'solitary and alone I set the ball in motion.'"

While the question of rescinding the resolutions of censure was pending Mr. Whittier wrote an article which was published in the village paper of Amesbury, in which he said: "Should the mem-

bers of the present legislature fail to see in this movement that the people of Massachusetts are in earnest in the matter, and, in consequence, indorse the unjust action of the extra session, they will find that the question cannot be thus disposed of. It will press with tenfold force on the next legislature, and enter into every election until the obnoxious resolutions are rescinded and annulled. The people of Massachusetts, during the past session of Congress, have learned to value more highly than ever the clean hands and lofty antique virtue of their great Senator. His spotless character, his life of noble aims and glorious achievements, are brought into strong relief against the corruption and miserable dishonesty of too many of his colleagues. They forgive what they regard as his errors in judgment on some points, in grateful admiration of a man who might well be justified in using Milton's language of lofty confidence in his reply to Salmasius : — 'I am not one who has disgraced beauty of sentiment by deformity of conduct, or the maxims of a free man by the actions of a slave, but, by the grace of God, I have kept my life unsullied.' "

Mr. Whittier had not followed Sumner out of the Republican party in 1872, but their personal friendship was not broken by political estrangement. On several occasions he came loyally to the defense of his friend when unjustly assailed.

When the intelligence of the death of Sumner reached Mr. Whittier, he sent this note to Mrs. Claflin : "I have just received a telegram announcing the death of our dear and noble friend,

Charles Sumner. My heart is too full for words. In deepest sympathy of sorrow I reach out my hands to thee and Governor Claflin, who loved him so well. He has died as he wished, at his post of duty, and when the heart of his beloved Massachusetts was turning towards him with more than the old-time love and reverence. God's peace be with him!"

When Massachusetts would do honor to the memory of her great senator, Whittier was naturally called upon by the "old Commonwealth," as he was wont lovingly to entitle her, for an ode to grace the memorial service. No monument of brass or marble will outlive the noble tribute to his friend which he presented for this occasion. In these stately elegiac verses the character and career of Sumner are sketched with fidelity to truth as well as loyalty to friendship. In accepting the commission of the State he says: —

> "I take with awe the task assigned;
> It may be that my friend might miss,
> In his new sphere of heart and mind,
> Some token from my hand in this.
>
> "By many a tender memory moved,
> Along the past my thought I send;
> The record of the cause he loved
> Is the best record of its friend."

It is with pardonable pride he refers to the expunging of the vote of censure, which was due to his own efforts: —

> "If for one moment turned thy face,
> O Mother, from thy son, not long
> He waited calmly in his place
> The sure remorse which follows wrong.

"Forgiven be the State he loved
The one brief lapse, the single blot;
Forgotten be the stain removed,
Her righted record shows it not!"

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.[1]

1873.

It is such a voice as I have long wished to hear. It is the old Christian testimony which the Puritan and Quaker bore in their better days, and it never was more needed than now. The war has demoralized all — the contagion of its shoddy extravagance has reached everybody. The church and the world are alike infected. It has entered cradle and nursery, and turned the sweet simplicity and grace of childhood into a fashionable scarecrow. . . . Think of these grotesque caricatures of womanhood at the ballot-box! Of legislators in panniers and bustles, scant of clothing where it is most needed, and loaded down where it is not!

TO CELIA THAXTER.

2d mo., 1873.

Thy long poem "Lars" is intense in its half-subdued power; but the terror and cruelty of the sea was never described more strongly. It occurred to me that as it now stands, with the Norse name of Lars and Elsa, it would be understood as a fancy foreign sketch. I have tried to localize it by these two verses[2] by way of introduction: —

"'Tell us a story of these isles,' they said, —
The daughters of the West, whose eyes have seen

[1] On receipt of *What to Wear*.

[2] Mr. Whittier's suggestion was adopted by Mrs. Thaxter, and her strong poem stands with these two stanzas as a preface.

For the first time the circling sea, instead
Of the blown prairie's waves of grassy green;

"'Tell us of wreck and peril, storm and cold,
Wild as the wildest.' Under summer stars,
With the slow moonrise at our back, I told
The story of our young Norwegian, Lars."

TO RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

9th mo., 1873.

Thy kind note, and that of my friend John M. Forbes, are before me. I cannot tell thee how glad I should be to accept so kind an invitation. The season, the place, above all the company, attract me strongly; and it pains me to know that I must forego the pleasure. I have been suffering for ten days with a cold, with feverish habit, and should be in my present condition a guest to be tolerated, and not enjoyed. As soon as I am able to bear the fatigue I must go up among the New Hampshire hills, away from the sea. Ah, me! How sorry I am! How glad I should be, as our dear Holmes says, to see "the sun set over fair Naushon!" Thank my friend Forbes for me, and tell him that his threatened anathemas of the irrepressible Benjamin[1] would not in the least disturb me. I should not trouble myself if Dr. Slop's anathemas were poured out upon him. Who pities a rhinoceros peppered with small shot? I fear, however, that we shall have the man for governor. The influence of the administration is on his side, or he will claim it, and will not be contradicted. I feel in regard to present party politics an immeasurable disgust.

[1] General Butler, then talked of for governor by Republicans.

When Patrick S. Gilmore was making preparations for his great Peace Jubilee of 1873, he called upon Mr. Whittier for an ode appropriate to the occasion. But the poet could never make any engagement for his muse; he would make no promise, and advised the famous bandmaster to look elsewhere. Not getting any first-class writer to undertake it, Gilmore made a public call, offering a prize for an accepted ode from any source. There came to Whittier at about this time the inspiration of the verse, "Blow, bugles of battle, the marches of peace," and when the ode, now known as "A Christmas Carmen," was complete, it occurred to him to have it offered to Gilmore anonymously. The ode was sent, and coming from an unknown source received no attention from Gilmore. Those who now read the poem, knowing the occasion for which it was written, will wonder how Gilmore failed to recognize the exquisite fitness of the ode for his purpose.

"Sing the bridal of nations! with chorals of love
Sing out the war-vulture, and sing in the dove,
Till the hearts of the peoples keep time in accord,
And the voice of the world is the voice of the Lord!
Clasp hands of the nations
In strong gratulations:
The dark night is ending, and dawn has begun;
Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!

"Blow, bugles of battle, the marches of peace;
East, west, north, and south, let the long quarrel cease;
Sing the song of great joy that the angels began,
Sing of glory to God, and of good will to man!
Hark! joining in chorus,
The Heavens bend o'er us!

The dark night is ending, and dawn has begun;
Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!"

TO MARGARET BURLEIGH.

AMESBURY, 10th mo., 18, 1873.

I can fully understand and sympathize with thy New York friend in her graphic description of a Quaker protracted meeting. I hope and believe that some good will grow out of the "new departure." There are some people who from the very constitution of their minds seem incapable of receiving any benefit from the quiet self-communing of ancient Quakerism, and all such who are nominally in our Society will run naturally into these extremes of demonstration. I cannot; I am confused and bewildered by these noisy meetings, which seem so edifying to others.

In November, 1873, Miss Larcom being confined to her house by illness, Mr. Whittier, whom she was assisting in the compilation of "Child-Life in Prose," wrote: "It will be a good time while thee are shut in doors to turn to that dreadful book, which should have the benefit of thy reflection, whether sick or well, as the ancient Germans debated all matters twice, once drunk, and once sober."

In his preface to "Child-Life in Prose," published in 1873, Mr. Whittier makes some comments which have an autobiographic passage in them, referring to his own childhood: —

"It may be well to admit, in the outset, that the book is as much for child-lovers, who have not

outgrown their child-heartedness in becoming men and women, as for children themselves; that it is as much *about* childhood, as *for* it. If not the wisest, it appears to me that the happiest people in the world are those who still retain something of the child's creative faculty of imagination, which makes atmosphere and color, sun and shadow, and boundless horizons, out of what seems to prosaic wisdom most inadequate material, — a tuft of grass, a mossy rock, the rain-pools of a passing shower, a glimpse of sky and cloud, a waft of west wind, a bird's flutter and song. . . . It is possible that the language and thought of some portions of the book may be considered beyond the comprehension of the class for which it is intended. Admitting that there may be truth in the objection, I believe, with Coventry Patmore in his preface to a child's book, that the charm of such a volume is increased rather than lessened by the surmised existence of an unknown element of power, meaning, and beauty. I well remember how, at a very early age, the solemn organ-roll of Gray's 'Elegy' and the lyric sweep and pathos of Cowper's 'Lament for the Royal George' moved and fascinated me with a sense of mystery and power felt rather than understood. 'A spirit passed before my face, but the form thereof was not discerned.' Freighted with unguessed meanings, these poems spake to me, in an unknown tongue indeed, but like the wind in the pines or the waves on the beach, awakening faint echoes and responses, and vaguely prophesying of wonders yet to be revealed."

TO JOSEPH CARTLAND.

4th mo., 1874.

Have you read Augustine Jones's discourse? It seems to me he has done remarkably well. He has given in concise form the distinctive doctrines and testimonies of Friends. But those who wish to have it understood that Quakerism differs in no respect from Methodism and other so-called Evangelical sects are bitter against it. I have had, within the last month, visits from several Orthodox clergymen, two of whom I took with me to meeting. I found their ideal of Friends not quite satisfied. They want the old quiet and plainness. One of them said, "We need to come towards you, but you seem disposed to come to us." I was very sorry to miss seeing cousin Mary E. and her sister when they called at the hotel. "Rhoda"[1] is regarded justly as a very promising story, and is to be published in book form, and will be quite popular, I am sure.

TO W. D. HOWELLS.

1874.

The poem ["A Sea Dream"] which I had on hand for the January number, on a careful re-perusal strikes me as one that the world can do without. It is more faultless in rhythm and construction than my ordinary style of pieces, but it lacks "excuse for being." I therefore send thee a rhymed epistle ["The Golden Wedding of Longwood"] on the occasion of the golden wedding of some old friends of mine in Kennett, Pa., in

[1] *Rhoda Thornton* was a story then recently published, of which Whittier's cousin, Mary E. Pratt, was the author.

Bayard Taylor's neighborhood. It is n't learned, nor graceful, nor obscure with transcendentalisms, — but plain, homely verse as befitted the subjects and occasion, and I like it, and think some others will.

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

6th mo., 6, 1874.

Of course thee saw the great wedding at the White House. Sometime thee shall tell me all about it, especially about the ladies' dresses, in which thee knows I have a particular interest. Did thee meet Kingsley? I like him hugely; he is a manly man. I sat for my head and shoulders to Edgar Parker, the portrait painter, last winter, and Longfellow and others say it is a perfect picture. When can thee be spared from the seat of government? Thee might just as well be a Member of Congress under what King James calls "the monstrous reign of the women." I wish thee *was* "the Member from Essex," with all my heart![1]

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

7th mo., 14, 1874.

I love Beecher and believe in him. He has done good to thousands. If he has fallen into temptation I shall feel grieved, but would be ashamed of myself were I less his friend.

TO CELIA THAXTER.

1874.

I wonder what the Islands would be without thee — a mere pile of rocks, I imagine, dead as the

[1] Butler then represented the district.

moon's old volcanic mountains. Thee have given them an atmosphere. Does thee know that Parton in his lecture on "Fashion" introduces thee as the best-dressed lady he ever saw? Such is the penalty of writing and making books!

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

AMESBURY, 11th mo., 30, 1874.

Thy beautiful book of "Noonings" came to hand, and, as usual, I find it wise and witty, with just enough of unwisdom to make it spicy and enjoyable. Of course, I turned right to the 291st page,[1] and read my canonization! I wonder whether the old saints when invested with robes of sanctity found it so difficult as I do to walk in them. "Jordan is a hard road to travel." I am afraid I shall have to go back to the Quaker coat, after all. Only a day or two ago I lost my temper because somebody who was not a saint, but only an average church member, was perverse and ill-dispositioned; and I disputed the bill of an Irishman who thought it right to make spoil of a Protestant Egyptian, and I dare say he went away with no satisfactory evidence of my saintship. A French Jesuit missionary tells of a young lad who had been set apart from infancy as a Buddha, and was

[1] The passage referred to is in a talk with a young child who quotes something from Whittier, as from the Bible; whereupon the author says: "Blessed and beloved apostle! Sweetest saint in all the calendar! Worthy successor of that disciple whom Jesus loved; gentlest and tenderest of all the Sons of Thunder, *I* should not have dared to follow my heart's promptings and class you with those holy men of old; but when out of the mouth of babes and sucklings your praise is perfected, it is not for me to stand by and say them nay."

held in reverence by the Mongol shepherds. He told the Frenchman that he supposed he was a Buddha, and must sit still and cross-legged in his tent, and be worshiped, but if it was all the same, he would rather play with the boys. I think I can understand the young Tartar. If one must be a saint, he must, but if it is all the same, I prefer the rôle of an ordinary human creature. When does thee go southward? I don't quite like all the results of the late elections; but it is some comfort to feel that we shall now cease to be introduced to strangers as Mr. —— and Miss ——, from "Butler's District." I have been hoping to see thee again before it is too late for the season. Thy visit here was a most welcome one, but too short. I don't believe thee knows how glad I am to see thee. God bless thee always!

Pleasant Valley, in Amesbury, is an aptly-named neighborhood on the left bank of the Merrimac, which in this part of its course has its bed far below the level of the surrounding country. At some points there is scant room for the river road between the high bluff and the water; at others a wedge of fertile intervale pushes back the steep bank. The comfortable houses of an ancient Quaker settlement are perched and scattered along this road in picturesque fashion. At the lower end of this valley, near the mouth of the Powow, on the edge of a bluff overlooking the Merrimac, Goody Martin lived more than two hundred years ago, and the cellar of her house was still to be seen when, in 1857, Whittier first told the story

of "The Witch's Daughter," which had the leading place in "Home Ballads," with the "Proem" which then covered the whole collection of ballads in that edition. The other additions were made when "Mabel Martin" in nearly its present form was issued in a volume by itself, beautifully illustrated, in 1875. The only historical foundation for this charming ballad is the fact that Goody Martin, who lived at the place so graphically described by the poet, was hanged as a witch, during the prevalence of the dreadful delusion, being the only woman who suffered death on a charge of witchcraft on the north side of the Merrimac. The first three of the following letters to James R. Osgood were written while work was in progress upon the illustrated edition of "Mabel Martin." Some of the illustrations were from designs by Miss Hallock: —

11th mo., 11, 1874.

I have made up my mind. I will have "Mabel Martin" ready for thee as soon as thee wish it. I shall add to it some eighty lines, which will make it longer than Longfellow's. What I shall add will be full of pictures, and I think quite as good as any part of the original poem. I am very sure thee will like it, and that Miss H. will find it well suited to her work. It will be necessary to have the entire poem put in fair type, and I must have a proof, after it is revised. Miss H. must have a copy and I want another. After it is printed so as to be readable I want Mr. Anthony to see it.

11th mo., 1874.

I send back the proof with some changes I think for the better. I shall not meddle further with it except perhaps here and there a verbal substitution, before it is fixed irrevocably in book form. I am inclined to make the title read, "Mabel Martin, a Summer Idyl." I would like to see the revised proof before it goes to Miss Hallock. The poem is much longer than Longfellow's, and I should prefer not to have it so full of pictures, but more reading matter in their place. If illustrated as fully as Longfellow's it would make a book at least one third larger. As it now stands I regard it as the best poem of the kind I have ever written, and I am pretty sure I could not improve upon it in a new poem at this late day. I trust a good deal to Dr. John Brown's opinion of it.

22d, 11th mo., 1874.

I promised I would add nothing more to this poem, but I was tempted to do it in one instance. If it will be a serious inconvenience to make the change indicated on page 8, do as thee please with the added verses. At any rate don't send any more proofs to me, for I fear I shall go to disturbing what I think is very well as it is. I think Miss Hallock will find sufficient material in the poem as it now stands to answer her purpose of picture-making.

11th mo., 4, 1875.

Never was there a prettier book than "Mabel Martin!" If it does not sell well it surely cannot be the fault of the publishers and artists. The

poem [1] thee refer to is scarcely worthy to be called such — some twelve or fifteen lines, a part of which many years ago were printed anonymously in the "Transcript." I don't know why they were sent by me — except that I was told Longfellow, Holmes, and Lowell had done likewise, or perhaps I was acting on the principle of the girl who married her importunate lover "to get rid of him." It is not worth troubling one's self about anyway.

12th mo., 25th, 1875.

I am greatly obliged, through thee, to receive from Mabel Martin her Christmas present of ($1000) one thousand dollars. I scarcely expected the young lady to "come down" so handsomely.

TO CELIA THAXTER.

3d mo., 1875.

I thought of thee at once when I heard of Bessie G——'s loss. How strange that we shall never see her more! That young, bright, beautiful life is gone out of the world! Ah me! by what a frail tenure do we hold all that we love! God help us to be true and generous and tender to each other while we may! . . I remember Lindley Murray's Grammar defined a verb as "a word signifying to be, to do, or to suffer," which is just my predicament, leaving out the "to do." . . . Thy "Swallows" is in thy very best style. More and more I congratulate myself on my share in urging thee to "exercise thy gift," as we Friends say. I can sympathize with thee, or, what

[1] It is not certain to what poem reference is here made.

is better, laugh with thee, over the ludicrous blunders of the types. One gets hardened to these petty annoyances. The droll thing is that sensible people read these absurd perversions of another's meaning, praise the poem, and are innocent of the slightest suspicion that all is not right. They give an occult and transcendental meaning to "sawdust," or suppose that they are not practical enough to discern the beauty and significance of it. . . . And is it so strange to thee that the good people of Portsmouth should be glad and proud of one who has made her name a household word in the land, and made their river and harbor and outlying islands immortal in song? How glad I am that I can say to thee, "I told you so years ago!" Sir Walter Raleigh and other old prospectors sought in this New World the land of Eldorado. They went too far south. They sailed by Merrimac River, never suspecting that it plowed down through the valley of gold they longed for. The sober old town of Newburyport is transformed.[1] Its hotels are full of gold-seekers, sleeping three in a bed, and on the floor. A neighbor of ours, recently married, commenced last fall to dig a cellar for his house; he is now blasting silver out of his cellar, and the prospect is that we shall soon be as crazy as the folks down river.

TO MRS. GEORGE L. STEARNS.

4th, 3d mo., 1875.

I wish thee could have been with us. Thee

[1] Silver had been found in the rocky pastures of the neighborhood.

would have seen a sight which will not be likely to occur again — Garrison, Elizur Wright, Samuel E. Sewall, and myself together — four gray old abolitionists, dating back to 1832! It seemed strange as a dream to call back the scenes and emotions, the hopes and fears of forty years ago!

TO JAMES R. OSGOOD.

20th, 3d mo., 1875.

I have added two verses, mainly for the sake of bringing the British lion and Yankee eagle together. I do not like to add the note thee suggest. It will or *ought* to be understood, but I have changed the word. It is possible that I may send the poem to the "Atlantic Monthly," which will be published on the 20th of April, after your celebration. I prefer to have its title only "Lexington, 1775."

TO THE SAME.

1st, 5th mo., 1875.

I stretched my Quakerism to the full strength of its drab in writing about the Lexington folks who were shot and did not shoot back. I cannot say anything about those who *did* shoot to some purpose on Bunker Hill.[1] These occasional poems are fatal to any poet save Dr. Holmes. He always manages to come off safely. I am sorry I cannot oblige thee in this matter, but I don't think any verses of mine could add lustre to the memorial.

[1] He had been asked to contribute to the Bunker Hill centennial.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

7th mo., 1875.

How good Longfellow's poem[1] is! A little sad, but full of "sweetness and light." Emerson, Longfellow, Holmes, and myself, all are getting to be old fellows, and that swan-song might serve for us all — "we who are about to die." God help us all! I don't care for fame, and have no solicitude about the verdict of posterity.

> "When the grass is green above us,
> And they who know us now and love us
> Are sleeping at our side,
>
> "Will it avail us aught that men
> Tell the world with lip and pen
> That we have lived and died?"

What we *are* will then be more important than what we have done or said in prose or rhyme, or what folks that we never saw or heard of think of us.

TO LYDIA MARIA CHILD.

1875.

Thy confession as respects thy services in the cause of freedom and emancipation does not shock me at all. The emancipation that came by military necessity and enforced by bayonets was not the emancipation for which we worked and prayed. But, like the Apostle, I am glad the gospel of Freedom was preached, even if by strife and emulation. It cannot be said that we did it; we, indeed, had no triumph. But the work itself was a success. It made us stronger and better men and women. Some had little to sacrifice, but I always

[1] *Morituri Salutamus.*

felt, my dear friend, that thee had made the costliest offering to the cause. For thee alone, of all of us, had won a literary reputation which any one might have been proud of. I read all thy early work with enthusiastic interest, as I have all the later. Some time ago I searched Boston and New York for thy "Hobomok," and succeeded in finding a defaced copy. How few American books can compare with thy "Philothea"! Why, my friend, thy reputation, in spite of the anti-slavery surrender of it for so many years, is still a living and beautiful reality. And after all, good as thy books are, we know thee to be better than any book. I wish thee could know how proudly and tenderly thee is loved and honored by the best and wisest of the land.

TO GERTRUDE W. CARTLAND.

BEARCAMP, 8th mo., 1875.

We have been here for the last three weeks. It is a quiet, old-fashioned inn, beautifully located, neat as possible, large rooms, nice beds, and good, wholesome table. . . . I send you a photograph taken a few weeks ago. It looks, as I suppose it should, rather the worse for wear. Can you not come up here for a few days, and may I not expect you this week?

TO A MOTHER.[1]

I read thy letter with sincere sympathy. I can understand thy disappointment. But it may not prove to thee or thy child so sad a calamity as thee

[1] Whose infant was in some way malformed.

now regard it. It might have been idiocy, the saddest of all for a mother. It happens that two of my neighbors were born lacking right hands. But both have been exceptionally happy and prosperous. One is a skillful physician, and the other a successful teacher. The son of the latter is the finest landscape painter in the United States.[1] Take courage, then; be thankful that the grief is no worse; trust thy dear child to the Lord. All will be well. If she is lovely in mind, or person, or life, she will be loved all the more for her deprivation.

TO EDNA DEAN PROCTOR.

AMESBURY, 10th mo., 1875.

I was greatly disappointed in not seeing thee when in New England. We visited the cars at each arrival [at West Ossipee] for two or three days, hoping to see thee step out. We had a pleasant company at the Bearcamp House — my nieces and half a dozen of their friends, and we should have made thee at home at once. I am far from well this autumn; yet the beautiful changes of the season have never seemed so sweet before, and life even with suffering seems desirable. When unable to leave home, I think of the friends I love, and the atmosphere warms and brightens around me, and my heart sings a hymn of thankfulness. What has thee read of late, and what written? I wonder thee does not write more, and how thee can keep so good a pen as thine still, I cannot conjecture.

[1] Charles H. Davis.

TO LUCY LARCOM.

16th, 10th mo., 1875.

Lizzie and I went to Danvers a week ago to meet the Johnsons at their new place.[1] It is very nice, — twenty acres of lawn and all sorts of fine trees. But I fear they will find it lonesome. It is the old Nathaniel Putnam place, where Ann Putnam and her young circle of witch-friends used to hold their gatherings. She was Nathaniel Putnam's niece. I wonder if the place is n't haunted by her or her victims? The Johnsons are altering the house and will make it very pleasant.

TO GERTRUDE W. CARTLAND.

1875.

I have been negotiating about the "Old Whittier Homestead," and there is some prospect of getting it, but I feel less and less interest in it. Who will care for it after a few of us are gone? To us, who have reached threescore or thereaway, the mansions of the earth are of small importance, in comparison with those spoken of by our Lord, where only true rest can be found.

"The Vaudois Teacher," one of Whittier's earliest poems, was translated into French, and for many years was well known and popular among the Waldenses, who adopted it as a household poem. But it was not known by them to be of American origin until 1875, when Rev. J. C. Fletcher gave the information to the Moderator of the Waldensian Synod. Mr. Fletcher, while a

[1] Oak Knoll.

student under D'Aubigné, at Geneva, found this to be a favorite poem among his fellow-students, but did not then know it was by Whittier. He visited Whittier in 1857, and had by this time learned who was the author of the poem. What he told the poet of the influence of his verses moved Whittier deeply, and he was greatly pleased to know that he had composed lines that had cheered the Christians of the Cottian Alps. Upon Mr. Fletcher's return to Italy, in 1875, he wrote to Moderator Charbonnier, who communicated the information at a banquet which closed the meeting of the Synod. When the announcement was made, the whole assembly, composed of pastors, missionaries, and foreign delegates, rose and received with enthusiasm the name of "Jean Greenleefy Vittier," as they pronounced it. The Moderator was instructed to write a letter of thanks to Mr. Whittier in the name of the Synod. This is the letter he sent, bearing date, Torré Pellicé, Piémont, Italie, September 13, 1875: —

Dear and Honored Brother, — I have recently learned by a letter from my friend, J. C. Fletcher, now residing in Naples, that you are the author of the charming little poem, "The Vaudois Colporteur," which was translated several years ago in French by Professor de Felicé, of Montauban, and of which there is also an excellent Italian translation, made by M. Giovanni Nicolini, Professor of our College at Torré Pellicé. There is not a single Vaudois who has received any education who cannot repeat from memory "The Vau-

dois Colporteur" in French or in Italian. The members of the Synod of the Vaudois Church assembled to the number of about seventy at a pastoral banquet, on Thursday evening, the 9th inst., and unanimously voted the motion which I had the honor of proposing, viz.: That we should send a very warm Christian fraternal salutation to the author of "The Vaudois Colporteur." I was intrusted with the duty of conveying this salutation to you — a duty which I fulfill with joy, expressing at the same time our gratitude to you, and also our wish to receive, if possible, from yourself the original English, which is still unknown to us, of this piece of poetry, which we so justly prize. Accept, dear and honored brother, these lines of respect and Christian love, from your sincere friend in the Lord Jesus,

J. D. Charbonnier,
Moderator of the Vaudois Church.

Mr. Whittier's reply, dated Amesbury, 10th mo., 21st, 1875, is in these words: —

My dear Friend, — I have received thy letter informing me of the generous appreciation of my little poem by the Synod of which thou art Moderator. Few events of my life have given me greater pleasure. I shall keep the letter amongst my most precious remembrances, and it will be a joy to me to know that in your distant country, and in those sanctuaries of the Alps, consecrated by such precious and holy memories, there are Christians, men and women, who think of me with

kindness, and give me a place in their prayers. May the dear Lord and Father of us all keep you always under His protection.

The letter of the Moderator was intrusted, for transmission to Mr. Whittier, to J. B. Braithwaite, a well-known English Friend, who chanced to be visiting Italy at that time, and who wrote to Mr. Whittier from La Tour sur Pignerol: "Being in these parts on a visit of Christian love to these dear and interesting people, I have been intrusted with the pleasing task of forwarding to thee the accompanying cordial salutation from the Vaudois Pasteurs, assembled at their Synod last week. Thy little poem, 'The Vaudois Colporteur,' has reached their hearts, and awakened a very warm feeling of Christian love. The Pasteur Charbonnier, the Moderator of the Synod, is a loving, warm-hearted Christian, and a man of considerable ability."

"The Vaudois Teacher" had currency in England as being written by Mrs. Hemans, until an English edition of Mr. Whittier's works was published in 1842.

In the winter of 1875, as Mr. and Mrs. Claflin, at whose house Whittier had been an honored guest, were about sailing for Europe, he handed them an envelope, saying, "I thought you might like my autograph." These lines were inclosed:

> "What shall I say, dear friends, to whom I owe
> The choicest blessings, dropping from the hands
> Of trustful love and friendship, as you go
> Forth on your journey to those older lands,
> By saint and sage and bard and hero trod?
> Scarcely the simple farewell of the Friends

Sufficeth; after you my full heart sends
Such benediction as the pilgrim hears
Where the Greek faith its golden dome uprears,
From Crimea's roses to Archangel snows,
The fittest prayer of parting: 'Go with God!'"

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

12th mo., 1875.

It was a very good thought of thine to send the handsome fireside implement [bellows], so useful as well as ornamental. In these times when the rascally railroads have cut off our dividends, after quarreling with each other until they are in the condition of the Kilkenny cats, with nothing but the tails of their prosperity left, an instrument for "raising the wind" is not undesirable. I had put my old asthmatic bellows in the care of a doctor skilled in lung diseases of that kind; as a cure is promised, I shall, agreeably to thy direction, make a wedding gift of thine. L—— is highly pleased, as she has an open fireplace in her new sitting-room, and bids me give thee my warm thanks, which she will, by the aid of the bellows, make still warmer if thee ever come to Portland.

The year 1875 is signalized in the Whittier bibliography by the publication of the collection of poems entitled "Hazel Blossoms," which has a reason for its name in the fact that the witch hazel throws out its bright yellow twists of spun gold in the late autumn; at sixty-eight the poet was already thinking of himself as in his "sere and yellow leaf," little dreaming that one fifth of his life, the best and most useful years, still re-

mained to him. The principal poem in the collection is the Charles Sumner ode, the strong, steady, dignified movement of which is in admirable keeping with its theme, and is unlike the usual work of Whittier, in its careful avoidance of impassioned utterance. There are probably few of his poems which cost him so much labor as was bestowed on this. Every stanza in it was recast many times.

In the same year appeared also "Songs of Three Centuries;" in compiling this, assisted by Miss Larcom, Whittier was quite rigid in his determination to exclude warlike poems. For this reason he did not at first intend to give Julia Ward Howe's "Battle Hymn," but proposed to represent her by another selection. Afterward he wrote to Miss Larcom, "I got over my Quaker scruples, or rather stifled them, and put in the 'Battle Hymn.'" And he added: "It seems to me that we have scarcely done justice to Campbell — but we can't print his war pieces, and so we will let him slide."

TO EDNA DEAN PROCTOR.

AMESBURY, 2d mo., 16, 1876.

Thy letter, bright and pleasant as the day on which it was written, has just reached me on one of the wildest and darkest days of sleet and wind-gusts, and very welcome it is. I have been at home most of the time this winter, but I spent three weeks of last month in Boston, at my old quarters in the Marlboro Hotel. I enjoyed being in the city, as I always do, though not able to go

about a good deal. I met Governor Claflin, who will return to Europe next month. I miss the family much when I am in Boston. My niece Lizzie is busy getting ready for flitting to Portland, where she is going to make a new home for herself and the junior editor of the "Transcript" of that city. So I shall be left alone, as I suppose an old bachelor should be, but I dare say I shall be provided for somehow, as I always have been.[1]

TO HARRIET M. PITMAN.

3d mo., 1876.

I have been about as usual this winter, and the company of cousins Joseph and Gertrude Cartland has been a great relief to the tediousness of the season. We have often spoken of thee and wished we could see thee. General Hawley and the chairman of the Centennial Committee came on to see me a while ago, wishing me to write the ode or poem for the grand occasion, Longfellow having given it up. I declined, not feeling able to go through the severe nervous strain of such an effort. They have since urged me to write the hymn to be sung at the opening, and I shall try to fix up something, I suppose. After Joseph and Gertrude leave I must make some arrangement for myself. Of course I must keep the old home, but I shall spend considerable time with my cousins at Danvers.

[1] The confidence was not misplaced. His Amesbury residence was occupied till the end of his life by his friends, Mr. and Mrs. George W. Cate, whose pleasant companionship and courteous entertainment of his friends he warmly appreciated.

TO CELIA THAXTER.

BOSTON, 4th mo., 26, 1876.

I am here to-day in the worst east wind that ever blew in Boston (and that is saying much), attending the state convention for choice of delegates to Cincinnati. Lizzie was married a week ago to-day. Our small house had to be stretched on the occasion. The small rooms and cosy nooks answer a very good purpose for courting, but are not at all adapted to matrimonial celebrations. It 's rather lonely since Lizzie left us. But "such is life." . . . Thy poem ["A Faded Glove"] in "Harper's" is very sweet and tender in sentiment and feeling. It is in a rather new vein, but the vigor of the language betrays its authorship. Whether thee speak of the sea or not, the strength of the wind and waters is in thy verse.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

1876.

It was very kind in thee to think of me in the midst of emperors, and mandarins with their buttons, and pachas with many tails, and all that grand show and world display at Philadelphia. I sent my hymn [the "Centennial Hymn"] with many misgivings, and am glad it was so well received. I think I should have liked to have heard the music, but probably I should not have understood. "The gods have made me most unmusical." . . . I don't expect to visit Philadelphia. The very thought of that Ezekiel's vision of machinery and the nightmare confusion of the world's curiosity shop appalls me, and I shall not venture myself amidst it.

In 1876, the marriage of his niece, who had been at the head of his household since the death of his sister, led to Mr. Whittier's acceptance of the invitation of his three cousins, the Misses Johnson and Mrs. Woodman,[1] to make his home with them during part of the year. They had recently purchased the beautiful estate in Danvers, for which Mr. Whittier had suggested the name of "Oak Knoll." It was a farm of sixty acres, to which some acres have been added since the purchase in 1875. It is upon an old road between Boston and Newburyport, not the main line of travel. Upon this place lived the Rev. George Burroughs, who suffered death as a wizard two hundred years ago. The well of his homestead is still shown under the boughs of an immense elm by the roadside. The house now upon the estate stands on elevated ground at considerable distance from the road, and with its great Doric pillars has a somewhat stately effect, although constructed entirely of wood. In front of the house, and completely encircled by the curving approaches, is a picturesque knoll in the form of a dome, covered with a luxuriant carpet of grass, making one of the most charming lawns it is possible to imagine. This knoll, the summit of which is a little higher than the site occupied by the house, is crowned by two magnificent trees, an oak and a hickory. The estate might well have been named for either of these noble trees. The grounds slope towards the east,

[1] These three sisters are granddaughters of Mr. Whittier's uncle, Obadiah Whittier, an older brother of his father, John Whittier.

the south, and the west, with just enough of irregularity to heighten the beauty of the landscape in each direction. Trees, in clumps and singly, deciduous and evergreen, are placed with careful reference to artistic effect. The variety of trees is great, many of them being rarely seen in New England. There is a fine magnolia near the house, and farther off a tulip-tree. The rich dark hue of a purple beech calls attention to a fine grove in the western distance. There are English elms and English oaks, an immense Norway spruce,[1] also hemlocks, pines, chestnuts, and almost every other tree that can be made to grow in this climate. There are great orchards of apples and pears; a garden flanked with luxuriant grapevines, and yielding all the smaller fruits, as a matter of course, also roses in abundance. Near the eastern piazza of the house is a large circular flower garden surrounded by a neat hedge, with great green arches for gateways to it. In the centre of this garden is a fountain throwing a fine spray to a considerable height.

No shooting is allowed on the estate, and squirrels and birds sometimes come to the window to be fed.

Mr. Whittier in the summer time took much pleasure in these grounds, which gave him the seclusion he desired, and the opportunity for exercising some of the old skill that as a farmer he had acquired on his ancestral acres at Haverhill. The love of trees, plants, and flowers had ever been a passion of his life, and the ways of birds and

[1] Named by Dr. Holmes, "The Poet's Pagoda."

other wildlings interested him. The dogs upon the place became his pets. He enjoyed also the companionship of a young girl, an adopted daughter of Mrs. Woodman. For several years he spent a large part of the time at Oak Knoll, going to Amesbury to vote, to look after his little estate there, to mingle with his old friends and neighbors, to care for his dependents, to greet his Quaker friends at the Quarterly Meetings, and to have a hand in local politics. With advancing old age he turned oftener to his Amesbury home, and to his cousins, the Cartlands, at Newburyport, whom he accompanied year by year to his favorite summer resorts among the mountains and lakes of New Hampshire. Toward the last of his life he spent only a few weeks in the year at Danvers, manifesting more and more a desire to be at or near the home consecrated by memories of his mother and sister.

Early in 1876, Mr. Whittier was called upon to write the ode for the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia (not the hymn to be sung at the opening, which he afterward wrote, but the ode for the Fourth of July occasion). He declined to undertake this, as also did Bryant, Lowell, and Holmes, and Bayard Taylor was at length persuaded to write it. But Taylor had already written the hymn for the opening, and when he undertook the ode he withdrew this hymn. Whittier was then urged by Commissioners Hawley and Morrill to write the hymn, but was unwilling to promise to do it. Bayard Taylor added his entreaties, in the following letter, dated New York, March 21: —

My dear Friend, — Let me, at the risk of being a nuisance, add my voice to that of Hawley and Morrill, and beg that you will write the hymn for the opening of the Centennial Exhibition! I was chosen for the task, two months ago, and the hymn was complete, when the heavier duty of the ode devolved upon me, through the failure of so many better men to accept it. I know that this honor came to me chiefly through the kind suggestion of my name by you and Holmes. I feel it as a great responsibility, but I do not dare to decline, and shall both pray and labor to do the work worthily.

Of course the acceptance of the ode obliged me to withdraw the hymn. It would never answer for one author to do both. Moreover, I represent Pennsylvania, the cantata for the opening is furnished by Georgia, and the hymn must come from New England. Among American poets, you are by nature the high priest and thus fitted for this task. I wrote but five six-line stanzas, in the measure of Addison's "spacious firmament;" but five four-line stanzas — twenty lines in all — would really be sufficient. As it will be sung by a large chorus, and the personal presence of the author is not necessary, I cannot help but appeal to you as a dear old friend, as one who knows Pennsylvania, and as a true American, to help in this emergency. Knowing the state of your health, I was not surprised that you declined the ode, — but I am both surprised and mortified that Bryant, Lowell, and Holmes also declined. (Longfellow had a valid reason.) I anticipate being abused over

the shoulders of the commission, as well as upon my own; for the absence of our best names in song will not be generally understood. If you will only contribute the hymn it will cheer, strengthen, and dignify us all.

On the 22d of March, Mr. Whittier replied: "I have n't an idea in my head, and if I had, my head, possessed by the fiend Neuralgia, is in no condition to make it available. I am glad thee are to write the ode. It is right and fitting every way, and thee will do it grandly. As for the hymn, will thee do me the very great favor to send me a copy of *thy* draft of it? I want something suggestive to look at, before I decide to try to do anything; and I shall delay answering General Hawley's note until I hear from thee. Let me hear from thee by return mail."

This note came from Mr. Taylor by the next mail: "Your letter of yesterday just received, and I am delighted to find in it a *wish* to undertake the task. I most willingly send the hymn I had written, but have since withdrawn. Do not hesitate to make free use of any idea of mine which may seem appropriate. I shall be very glad indeed if I am able, in this way, to furnish kindling-wood for your fire. And that is all my hymn is worth now, since I shall suppress it wholly. April will surely be a balmier month than this March, and if you see but a single bud swelling, say 'Yes!' and it will surely open before May."

On the 25th, Whittier wrote: "Take my

thanks for thy prompt sending of thy hymn.[1] It is too good, and almost discourages me. I want to beg, borrow, or steal from thee two lines, slightly changed : —

> " ' And unto common good ordain
> The rivalries of hand and brain.'

I covet more, but my conscience won't let me shoot any more in thy preserves. I am delighted with

[1] Mrs. Taylor has kindly permitted the publication in these pages of her late husband's *Centennial Hymn*, never before in print : —

" O God of Peace ! now o'er the world
The armies rest, with banners furled :
O God of Toil ! beneath thy sight
The toiling nations here unite ;
O God of Beauty, bend and see
The Beautiful that shadows Thee !

" Our land, young hostess of the West,
Now first in festal raiment dressed,
Invites from every realm and clime
Her sisters of the elder time,
And bare of shield, ungirt by sword,
Bids welcome to her bounteous board.

" Thy will, dear Father, gave to each
The force of hand, the fire of speech ;
Thy guidance led from low to high,
Made failure still in triumph die,
And set for all, in fields apart,
The oak of Toil, the rose of Art !

" What though, within thy plan sublime,
Our eras are the dust of time,
Yet unto later good ordain
This rivalry of hand and brain,
And bless, through power and wisdom won,
The peaceful cycle here begun !

" Let each with each his bounty spend,
New knowledge borrow, beauty lend !
Let each in each more nobly see
Thyself in him, his faith in Thee :
All conquering power Thy gift divine,
All glory but the seal of Thine ! "

the idea of thy writing the ode. It needs thy combination of patriot and cosmopolitan to do it aright. I will indorse thee in advance, and so will Holmes, Longfellow, and Fields."

Bayard Taylor immediately replied: "Take all you want and welcome! There are some expressions which *any* hymn for the occasion must include; and such should be considered common property. I am only too glad to be of service in this way; my own hymn could in no case be published. . . . Thanks for your good wishes about the ode. It gives me the feeling of being about to storm an imminent deadly breach, — but if I fall, I am determined it shall be face forwards. The general acceptance of the appointment has been very kind."

On the 6th of July, 1876, Whittier wrote. "Let me heartily congratulate thee on thy noble and lofty-toned ode. It is in full accordance and keeping with the great occasion, and will link thy name honorably with it forever. I felt sure thee could do full justice to the theme, and I am sure all will agree with me that thee have done so. I wish I could have heard thy recitation of it."

Dom Pedro, emperor of Brazil, became acquainted with the writings of Mr. Whittier in 1855, and ever after that date welcomed each new volume of his, so long as he lived. When he visited the United States in 1876, the emperor was especially anxious to meet Longfellow and Whittier, and the Quaker poet was equally desirous of an interview with the Brazilian statesman and philanthropist, through whom there was then hope

of the abolition of the last vestige of slavery on the American continents. On the 8th of June, Mr. Whittier wrote to J. T. Fields: —

"Will the Atlantic Club have Dom Pedro as its guest? It has occurred to me that he would like it better than being toted about, looking at Boston public buildings. I would like very well to meet him, though I don't speak any language but my own, and that not very well. If he could only do as other folks do, I should like to have thee and Mrs. F. escort him here, where we could see him apart from the fuss and feathers of ceremony, for an hour or two. But owing to the 'divinity that doth hedge a king,' that can't be, of course. . . . I shall not try to reach him through the double wall of Boston and court etiquette. He is a splendid man, let alone his title and rank."

Mrs. Claflin gives this account of Whittier's first interview with the emperor: —

"Dom Pedro was invited one morning to a private parlor to meet some of the men who have made Boston famous in the world of letters. As one after another was presented to him, he received each graciously, but without enthusiasm. But when Mr. Whittier's name was announced his face suddenly lighted up, and grasping the poet's hand, he made a gesture as though he would embrace him, but seeing that to be contrary to the custom, he passed his arm through that of Mr. Whittier, and drew him gently to a corner, where he remained with him, absorbed in conversation, until the time came to leave. The emperor, taking the poet's hand in both his own again, bade him a reluctant

farewell, and turned to leave the room, but still unsatisfied, he was heard to say, 'Come with me,' and they passed slowly down the staircase, his arm around Mr. Whittier."

TO EDNA DEAN PROCTOR.

Isles of Shoals, 7th mo., 1876.

The intense heat has driven me here for a few days, but the same cause has crowded these rocks, so that there is little more than standing room for us. I have to thank thee for two letters, the last inclosing the "Tribune's" report of the reception of Dom Pedro. It was kind in Bayard Taylor to quote my verses on the occasion. I heartily wish thee could be here this beautiful morning. I know by its heat-hazed outline that the coast is scorching, but a gentle southwest wind, cooled by blowing over twelve miles of sea, keeps us comfortable. The only trouble is there are rather too many of us, especially at the dinner tables. I believe there are about five hundred guests at the Appledore House. May I not hope to see thee this summer? My niece is keeping house very pleasantly in Portland, but I have two cousins at my house in Amesbury, and I should be glad to see thee there. I had a line from dear Mrs. Claflin, but have not yet seen her. I have not felt able to get to Newtonville these tropic days, most of which I have spent at my half-way house, at Oak Knoll, in Danvers, midway between Amesbury and Boston.

In a letter to Mrs. Child, written in 1876, Mr. Whittier says of Colonel Shaw: "I know of no-

thing nobler or grander than the heroic self-sacrifice of young Colonel Shaw. The only regiment I ever looked upon during the war was the 54th, colored, on its departure for the South. I shall never forget the scene. As he rode at the head of his troops, the very flower of grace and chivalry, he seemed to me beautiful and awful as an angel of God come down to lead the host of freedom to victory. I have longed to speak the emotions of that hour, but I dared not, lest I should indirectly give a new impulse to war. For his parents I feel that reverence which belongs to the highest manifestation of devotion to duty and forgetfulness of self, in view of the weighty interests of humanity. There must be a noble pride in their great sorrow. I am sure they would not exchange their dead son for any living one."

A favorite summer resort of Mr. Whittier, for many years previous to the burning of the hotel, was the Bearcamp House at West Ossipee, N. H. Several poems celebrate this region, including "Among the Hills," "Sunset on the Bearcamp," "Seeking the Waterfall," and the "Voyage of the Jettie." The inn was sometimes nearly filled with the relatives and friends of the poet, and these reunions were occasions of memorable enjoyment. Mr. Whittier could not accompany his friends in their mountain-climbing and drives to distant objects of interest, but he found enough to occupy his attention close at hand, and he especially enjoyed the reports of adventures that were brought to him by the younger members of his party. At this hotel, as at home, he took charge of the fires,

and of an evening would have his friends grouped around the ample hearth, joining with zest in all the sport in which they indulged. In the summer of 1876, when he and Lucy Larcom were engaged together in the compilation of the "Songs of Three Centuries," their work was brought to the Bearcamp House, but it was not allowed to interfere seriously with the main object of a summer outing, rest and recreation. Sometimes, a transient guest of the hotel would be invited to join the circle, but Mr. Whittier was usually under some constraint in the presence of a stranger, especially if there was any show of a reporting pencil.

TO HIS NIECE, MRS. PICKARD.

BEARCAMP RIVER HOUSE, 30th, 8th mo., 1876.

Thee must come up now; don't disappoint us all. Come and help eat our bear, which was killed two or three days ago on Chocorua. We have had nice tender and sweet steaks from him; and there is another old fellow on the highest peak of Ossipee mountain, who lately came down across the meadows here, to the cornfield. He has his den somewhere up there. Come and join us before our company is broken up.

TO HARRIET M. PITMAN.

10th mo., 1876.

I have spent a large part of the summer at Danvers very quietly, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot," unable to write or read much, spending the hot days under the pines, and fully realizing that the country can get on very well

without me. I only wished more of my friends of old days could be with me. For as the years pass and one slides so rapidly down the afternoon slope of life, until the dark and chill of the evening shadows rest upon him, he longs for the hands and voices of those who, in the morning, went up on the other side with him. The awful mysteries of life and nature sometimes almost overwhelm me. "What, Where, Whither?" These questions sometimes hold me breathless. How little after all do we know! And the soul's anchor of Faith can only grapple fast upon two or three things, and first and surest of all upon the Fatherhood of God.

Joseph and Gertrude Cartland have bought a pleasant place in Newburyport and like it very much. I am glad they are so near. I am reading Dr. Norman McLeod's Life — one of the most interesting of books — sweet, earnest, playful, full of love and good works, enlivened all along with poetry and Scotch humor.

TO LUCY LARCOM.

AMESBURY, 10th mo., 30, 1876.

No, I am not going to Newburyport. It is passing droll to see how the newspapers dispose of me this season. First, I am domiciled at Peabody; next, I was buying a residence in Portland; then I was dwelling in my cottage at the Shoals, secluded from everybody; then I am spending the summer at Martha's Vineyard as the guest of Dr. *Somebody* whom I never heard of; and now it seems I am in Newburyport! Was there ever such a Wandering Jew? A fellow in New York, the son

of a United States Senator, wrote me not long ago that as he understood I was well off and had a summer cottage on the Isles of Shoals, he wished me to let him have $200, as he was very hardly pressed for money! I wish I could go to sleep and wake up and find myself in the West Indies or Lower California. My cousins, the Cartlands, are located at Newburyport. They have bought and fitted up the house at the corner of High Street and Broad, where they will be glad to see thee.

TO MRS. CHARLES KINGSLEY.

1876.

In this country thy husband's memory is cherished by thousands, who, after long admiring the genius of the successful author, have learned, in his brief visit, to love him as a man. I shall never forget my first meeting with him in Boston. I began, naturally enough, to speak of his literary work, when he somewhat abruptly turned the conversation upon the great themes of life and duty. The solemn questions of a future life, and the final destiny of the race, seemed pressing upon him, not so much for an answer (for he had solved them all by simple faith in the divine goodness) as for the sympathetic response of one whose views he believed to be, in a great degree, coincident with his own. "I sometimes doubt and distrust myself," he said, "but I see some hope for everybody else. To me the gospel of Christ seems indeed good tidings of great joy to all people; and I think we may safely trust the mercy which endureth *forever*." It impressed me deeply to find

the world-renowned author ignoring his literary fame, unobservant of the strange city whose streets he was treading for the first time, and engaged only with "thoughts that wander through eternity." All I saw of him left upon me the feeling that I was in contact with a powerfully earnest and reverent spirit. His heart seemed overcharged with interest in the welfare, physical, moral, and spiritual, of his race. I was conscious in his presence of the bracing atmosphere of a noble nature. He seemed to me one of the manliest of men. I forbear to speak of the high estimate which, in common with all English-speaking people, I place upon his literary life-work. My copy of his "Hypatia" is worn by frequent perusal, and the echoes of his rare and beautiful lyrics never die out of my memory. But since I have seen *him*, the man seems greater than the author.

This is an extract from Mrs. Kingsley's reply: "He wrote to me (while in America) in such terms of love and appreciation of you, and twice repeated it was 'such a like-minded talk' he had with you. It did so refresh him. I shall always bless and thank you, and every one who gave him a moment's refreshing in the dusty road of life! And I do bless, and shall ever love, the dear American people who first appreciated his works and then welcomed their author so lovingly. . . . I thank you deeply once more, and hope in that other life I may know you and meet you, with my husband."

TO EDNA DEAN PROCTOR.

11th mo., 4, 1876.

I feel anxious about the election. I think Hayes would be a safer man than Tilden, for the next four years. Tilden, however he might feel and wish, could not control his party. I hope I shall be able to vote, for I would n't like to lose my vote at this time. I have written a little poem which will appear in the February "Atlantic," which I hope thee will like. Did thee not say that thy ancestor was one of the suspected in the old witch times? My piece is entitled "The Witch of Wenham."

TO THE SAME.

2d mo., 22, 1877.

I have not read Joseph Cook's letters carefully, but a hasty perusal of two of them gave me the impression of a good deal of ability and smartness on the part of the author. After all, there is no great use in arguing the question of immortality. One must feel its truth. You cannot climb into heaven on a syllogism. Moody and Sankey are busy in Boston. The papers give the discourses of Mr. Moody, which seem rather commonplace and poor, but the man is in earnest, and believes in all the literalness of the Bible and of John Calvin. I hope he will do good, and believe that he will reach and move some who could not be touched by James Freeman Clarke or Phillips Brooks. I cannot accept his theology, or part of it at least, and his methods are not to my taste. But if he can make the drunkard, the gambler, and the debauchee into decent men, and make the lot of their

weariful wives and children less bitter, I bid him God-speed. Anything that lessens the sin of our poor humanity, any approximation to the life and spirit of the Divine Master, is to be rejoiced over. I feel more the need of a deeper consecration to truth and duty, on the part of all who profess to be Christians, than of putting any obstacles in the way of such a man. I like his aim better than his theology.

Whittier once said: "It is one thing to hold fast the faith of our fathers, the creed of the freedom-loving Puritan and Huguenot, and quite another to set up the five points of Calvinism, like so many thunder-rods, over a bad life, in the insane hope of avoiding the divine displeasure;" and again: "There is something in the doctrine of total depravity and regeneration. We are born selfish. The discipline of life develops the higher qualities of character, in a greater or less degree. It is the conquering of innate selfish propensities that makes the saint; and the giving up unduly to impulses that in their origin are necessary to the preservation of life that makes the sinner."

Whittier's conversations with intimate friends dealt largely in the mysteries of psychology and the problems of the future life. Without yielding credence to the claims of so-called spiritualism, the topic had a fascination for him, and he listened with interest to the marvellous stories of more credulous investigators. But he would say, "It is all very strange and wonderful, but

thee had better let it alone. No good comes of it."

Mrs. Claflin says that with Mrs. Stowe he would sit till the small hours, and till the lights burned blue, to tell stories of ghosts and spirit rappings and manifestations. They "wooed the courteous ghosts" together; but he said, "Much as I have wooed them, they never appear to me. Mrs. Stowe is more fortunate — the spirits sometimes come at her bidding, but never at mine — and what wonder? It would be a foolish spirit that did not prefer her company to that of an old man like me."

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

7th mo., 15, 1877.

I do not know on what part of this planet thy blessed feet are resting at this moment, but I venture to send a line to Ashantee, just to tell thee that I have enjoyed thy mischievous political letters, though not always able to say "Amen" to them. Their art is "just splendid," as a schoolgirl would say. Stanley Matthews, who is really a fine fellow, and smart enough to appreciate a good thing even at his expense, must have tempered the vexation of thy epistle with a full sense of the capital fun and humor of it. The humbug of Reform is no better than other humbugs, but I am naturally inclined to think the best I can of all who claim to be trying to set the world aright.

And I have just conversed with thee in another shape — that of a theologian. I read thy little book[1] with deep interest and earnest sympathy.

[1] *What Think Ye of Christ?*

My own mind had, from the same evidence which thee adduce, become convinced of the *Divinity* of Christ; but I cannot look upon him as other than a man like ourselves, through whom the Divine was made miraculously manifest. Jesus of Nazareth was a man, the *Christ* was a God — a new revelation of the Eternal in Time. Thy book seems to me written with wonderful clearness and ability, and will command the respect and attention of the best thinkers.

And now Proteus takes a new form, and a very pleasant and fascinating one. I took up thy novel[1] last *night*, and, despite of aching head and eyes, read it straight through, and laid it down with regret that it was not longer. What a noble hero thee has made of the unsensational banker! The portrait of him is charming. His self-forgetting and self-restraining delicacy of feeling towards the bewildered and blinded young wife is a needed lesson to all who think the mere marriage ceremony gives them absolute right to the soul and body of another. I like the book entirely. I wish thee would sometimes look in upon me at Oak Knoll, where I shall be for the next six weeks. When thee are in Salem, the cars will take thee to within a short mile of us, and the coach is ready to take thee to our door. At any rate, here or there, staying or coming, politician, novelist, or theologian, — God bless thee!

Our dear Mrs. —— could not disguise herself as Mrs. Leveridge. I knew her, as Falstaff did Prince Hal, — by instinct!

[1] *First Love is Best.*

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.[1]

6th, 7th mo., 1877.

I am more and more astonished that such a man as Confucius could have made his appearance amidst the dull and dreary commonplaces of his people. No wiser soul ever spoke of right and duty, — but his maxims have no divine sanction, and his pictures of a perfect society have no perspectives opening to eternity. Our Dr. Franklin was quite of the Confucius order — though a very much smaller man.

Whittier once said: "I think every child should cling to the faith of its parents until it learns something better. The heathen, until they know something better, should cling to the faith of their parents. I can conceive of their being in such a state of mind that they would gladly receive the truth of Christ, if it came to them, and God will give them credit for that. In fact, I don't know but that the Hindus, swinging on their flesh-hooks, and others like them, are doing the best they know. They want to get rid of their sins in some way. But on the other hand, there are some who make faith everything. I have been in the habit of reading a paper published by Dr. Cullis, of Boston. But I don't place much credit in the answers to prayer there stated. He gets his contributions just as many other institutions do. Here is a man who has $100 to give to benevolence, and he gives it, giving the Doctor $25, the missionary society $25, etc. Dr. Cullis publishes that his

[1] About Samuel Johnson's *Oriental Religions.*

came in answer to prayer. So does the other just as much. . . . When men put faith on the material ground, who can wonder that Tyndall should propose a prayer test? I cannot help believing in prayer for spiritual things. Being fully possessed of Christ, then it is He that prays. The heartiest prayer is to pray, 'Thy will be done.' I have seen some who profess to have attained perfection according to their ideas, but I do not believe it possible to get it, to be sinless. None other than a perfect standard could be given toward which to aim. A woman came to me who said she came because she was sent. 'If thee are sent of God,' I said to her, 'then thee are welcome; I will welcome anything from God.' I asked her, 'Have thee no concern about thyself as compared with the infinite purity of God?' 'That is not the question that concerns me,' said she; 'I have shifted the whole responsibility on to Christ.' I answered that I thought that it would have been a singular event if, when Christ told the disciples to watch and pray, they had said, 'We have shifted that over to you, and it does not further concern us.' I asked the woman what her neighbors thought of her, but she did not answer this pertinent inquiry."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY, AND LATER YEARS.

1877–1884.

Upon the approach of the seventieth anniversary of Whittier's birth, the "Literary World" published, in its issue of December 1, 1877, a remarkable array of tributes in verse and prose. Longfellow led off the singing choir with his charming sonnet, "The Three Silences;" Bayard Taylor sent "A Friend's Greeting," and E. C. Stedman, "Ad Vatem." Dr. Holmes, Paul H. Hayne, J. G. Holland, G. P. Lathrop, Hiram Rich, William Lloyd Garrison, Lydia Maria Child, James Freeman Clarke, W. S. Shurtleff, Celia Thaxter, Charlotte F. Bates, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Lucy Larcom, Israel Washburn, Jr., Henry Morford, C. P. Cranch, and Thomas S. Collier sent poems. Letters full of warm friendship and deep respect came from the venerable Richard H. Dana, W. C. Bryant, George Bancroft, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Francis Parkman, T. W. Higginson, Charles W. Eliot, Robert Collyer, George William Curtis, and Charles B. Rice. Such an array of great names in literature had not before been seen together in a single number of an American journal. Whittier was deeply touched by this outpouring of the hearts of his

literary friends, and uttered his characteristic "Response" in the sonnet beginning: "Beside that milestone where the level sun." This unique symposium was followed on the 17th of December by a dinner given at Hotel Brunswick, in Boston, by the publishers of the "Atlantic Monthly," to the contributors to that magazine, in honor of Whittier, who was with difficulty induced to attend the festival in person.[1] Mr. H. O. Houghton presided, with Whittier, Emerson, and Longfellow at his right, and Holmes, Howells, and Warner at his left. Among the guests were Higginson, Stoddard, Whipple, Weiss, J. T. Trowbridge, John Trowbridge, Underwood, Scudder, O'Reilly, Cranch, Clemens, and about fifty others. Mr. Houghton gave a brief history of the magazine, which was celebrating its twentieth anniversary. He introduced Whittier, and the entire company arose and cheered. When the cheering had subsided, Mr. Whittier said, slowly, and with some natural embarrassment in a situation so new to him: —

"You must know you are not to expect a speech from me to-night. I can only say that I am very glad to meet with my friends of the 'Atlantic,' a great many contributors to which I have only known through their writings, and that I thank them for the reception they have given me. When I supposed that I would not be able to

[1] When he got word about this proposed banquet, he wrote to his niece: "They are wanting to make a fuss over my birthday on the 17th. I think I have put a stop to it. It is bad enough to be old, without being twitted of it."

attend this ceremony, I placed in my friend Longfellow's hands a little bit of verse that I told him, if it were necessary, I wished he would read. My voice is of 'a timorous nature and rarely to be heard above the breath.' Mr. Longfellow will do me the favor to read the writing. I shall be very much obliged to him, and hope at his ninetieth anniversary some of the younger men will do as much for him."

Longfellow then read the "Response," Emerson read Whittier's "Ichabod," and speeches were made by Howells, Charles Eliot Norton, Warner, Higginson, W. W. Story, and others. Dr. Holmes read the poem in which he speaks of Whittier as "the wood-thrush of Essex." Richard Henry Stoddard read a sonnet to Whittier, which was notable as the cordial utterance of a political opponent.

The same anniversary was observed at Whittier's home in Amesbury, at Danvers, and in other places. The ladies of Amesbury sent him a portfolio of water-color sketches of places immortalized in his verse. The newspapers of every part of the country made the occasion the theme of extended comment, giving the record of his useful life, extolling his unselfish patriotism, his devotion to the cause of the oppressed, and the character and purity of his verse. The pulpit discoursed upon his songs of charity and piety. This chorus of praise, from every quarter, affected Mr. Whittier deeply. It gratified him to know that the love he had given out for his race was coming back to him in full measure. But he knew so thoroughly his own limitations and weaknesses that he

discounted the extravagances of adulation, and accepted only what he had reason to think belonged to him. It was in no insincere spirit he wrote or said his modest words of acknowledgment. To the citizens of Amesbury who had sent him a letter of high appreciation and warm affection he wrote: —

"Forty years ago I came to dwell among you, although the place of worship which I have always frequented, within the bounds of the village, had made me familiar with it from early childhood. I can testify to the uninterrupted kindly and friendly relations which have existed between us during that long period. You have known me thoroughly; my whole life, with its faults, follies, and better characteristics, has been before you in the daily intercourse of citizens and neighbors; and qualified as you are to judge of it, it is an unspeakable satisfaction to know that you can render so favorable a verdict. You will, I know, pardon me if I say that while the praise, which in the excess of your kindness you have bestowed upon me, has been very grateful to me, it has awakened a painful sense of my unworthiness to receive it without great qualification. I beg you, my old friends of Amesbury and Salisbury, to accept my warmest thanks for this testimonial, and for the delicate and considerate manner of its presentation. Circumstances may make our intercourse somewhat less constant and familiar than in former years, but your interests and welfare are mine; there is not a face among you that I shall not always be glad to see; not a rod of soil on the

Merrimac or the Powow that I shall not be happy to retread; and about my hearth-fire in the old house on Friend Street I shall still hope often to meet you, as long as Providence, which has spared me hitherto, shall prolong my days."

The birthday number of the "Literary World" contained this anecdote from a contributor, illustrating Whittier's hospitality: —

"When I was a young man, trying to get an education, I went about the country peddling sewing silk to help myself through college; and one Saturday night found me at Amesbury, a stranger and without a lodging-place. It happened that the first house at which I called was Whittier's, and he himself came to the door. On hearing my request he said he was very sorry that he could not keep me, but it was Quarterly Meeting, and his house was full. He, however, took the trouble to show me to a neighbor's, where he left me; but that did not seem to wholly suit his idea of hospitality, for in the course of the evening he made his appearance, saying that it had occurred to him that he could sleep on a lounge and give up his own bed to me — which, it is perhaps needless to say, was not allowed. But this was not all. The next morning he came again, with the suggestion that I might perhaps like to attend meeting, inviting me to go with him; and he gave me a seat next to himself. The meeting lasted an hour, during which there was not a word spoken by any one. We all sat in silence that length of time, then all arose, shook hands, and dispersed; and I remember it as one of the best meetings I ever attended."

After Mr. Whittier had passed the Scriptural limit of active life, each of his birthdays was more or less celebrated by his friends and admirers throughout the country. In churches, schools, and seminaries commemoratory exercises were held. Wherever he happened to be, whether at Amesbury, or Danvers, or Newburyport, the tributes of a grateful people reached him. Sometimes, when he felt that he was not strong enough to receive his friends so hospitably as he could wish, he would quietly slip from one of his homes to another, and thus secure the quiet his health demanded. But when he enjoyed sufficient health and strength, he did not object to giving his friends an opportunity to offer their congratulations in person. When a reception proved to be too fatiguing, he was skillful in devising excuses for short absences from the crowded rooms, and in the quiet of his chamber he would soon get rid of a threatened headache, or mitigate the intensity of his suffering, and appear again among his guests ready to enjoy and respond to their greetings.

Soon after the celebration of his seventieth birthday, Mr. Whittier wrote to his friend, Julia A. Hodgdon: "Of course, I prize highly the love and good will of others, but the thing was too pretentious, and had too much publicity to be altogether pleasant. Over-praise pains like blame. I know my own weakness and frailty, and I am humbled rather than exalted by homage which I do not deserve. As the swift years pass, the Eternal Realities seem taking the place of the shadows and illusions of time."

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

4th mo., 7, 1878.

I agree with Canon Farrar that "life is worth living," even if one cannot sleep the biggest part of it away. Thee and I get more out of it, after all, than those "sleek-headed folks who sleep o' nights.". . . Against all my natural inclinations, I have been fighting for the "causes," half my life. "Woe is me, my mother," I can say with the old prophet, "who hast borne me a man of strife and contention." I have suffered dreadfully from coarseness, self-seeking vanity, and asinine stupidity among associates, as well as from the coldness or open hostility, and, worst, the ridicule of the outside world, but I now see that it was best, and that I needed it all.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Boston, June 19, 1878.

My dear Whittier, — 'T was very kind in you to tell me that my Andover poem pleased you. I wrote the poem rather as a duty than as a pleasure, and yet here and there I found myself taken off my feet by that sudden influx of a tide that comes from, we know not whence, but which makes being, and especially internal vision, so intense and real. You, as a poet, know so well what that means! But I will give a trivial illustration, which, to my mind, is much better than a grander one. In the intensified state of retrospection which came over me, a fact reproduced itself which I do not believe has come up before *for fifty years*. It was the "upward slanting floor" of the school-room at the

Academy. Not a poetical fact, and all the better for that, — not an important one, but still a fact which had its place in the old fresco that seemed to have utterly faded from the walls of memory. What an exalted state of vitality that is which thus reproduces obsolete trivialities as a part of its vivid picture-flashes, — just as in the experience, a hundred times recorded, of drowning persons who have been rescued! We may become intensely conscious of existence through pleasure or through pain, but we never know ourselves until we have tried both experiences, and I think that some of the most real moments of life are those in which we are seized upon by that higher power which takes the rudder out of the hands of *will* as the pilot takes the place of the captain, in entering some strange harbor, — and I am sure I never know where I am going to be landed, from the moment I find myself in the strange hands of the unknown power that has taken control of me. Not that there is much, if any, of what is called "inspiration" in the particular poem that pleases you; but there are passages, for all that, which I could not write, except in the clairvoyant condition. . . . To cover my egotisms, let me say to you unhesitatingly that *you* have written the most beautiful school-boy poem in the English language. I just this moment read it, because I was writing to you, and before I had got through "In School-Days," the tears were rolling out of my eyes. . . . Yes, I need not have said all this to you, as if you did not know it all, — perhaps I said it because you know it so well. . . . I am glad you are interested

in Dr. Clarke's book. I watched him during its preparation and discussed many points with him. To me the book is in every way full of interest, and it will always be memorable as having been written in the valley of the shadow of death. . . I have left no room for all the feelings I wish to express to you, — perhaps they are better imagined.

In June, 1878, Dr. William F. Channing wrote to Mr. Whittier a letter in which he made a spirited defense of his father, Dr. William Ellery Channing, who, in the Life of Harriet Martineau, edited by Mrs. Chapman, was accused of having prevented the Federal Street society from taking a stand against slavery, his action being imputed to moral cowardice. He also quoted a remark Mrs. Chapman made to him, to the effect that she considered Mr. Whittier, by his position in the Liberty party, to be in great moral danger. To this letter Mr. Whittier replied: —

"I have received thy letter, so permeated with pious regard for the memory of thy illustrious and sainted father. When I read Mrs. Chapman's remarks I felt indignant but not surprised. A moment's consideration, however, assured me that the incredible folly and falsehood could really do no harm to such a man as Dr. Channing. For he has left his own imperishable record — the undying proof of his love of freedom and abhorrence of slavery, and of his courage and self-sacrifice, in his writings. He is safe forever. Mrs. Chapman was an early and strenuous worker in the anti-

slavery cause, and I give her full credit for it. I understand well how she failed to comprehend and appreciate the labors of thy father, and of every man who, while periling all in the service of freedom, could bid God-speed to those outside of party who were yet doing something in their own way for the cause, and could make allowance for those who failed to see their duty clearly and who hesitated to pronounce our shibboleth. I am sorry, for her sake, that she has kept her old prejudices and misconceptions alive to this day.

"As to the matter of courage and self-sacrifice, very few of us have evinced so much of both as thy father. He threw upon the altar the proudest reputation, in letters and theology, of his day. With the single exception of Lydia Maria Child, I know of no one who made a greater sacrifice than thy father. I would gladly write an article on the subject if I could, but I am obliged to avoid any attempt at writing involving mental effort. But, as I said before, it does not seem necessary. With pleasant recollections of old anti-slavery days, I am truly and cordially thy friend."

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

BOSTON, October 10, 1878.

MY DEAR WHITTIER, — I know how to thank you for the poems, but I do not know how to thank you for the more than kind words which make the little volume precious. I never was so busy, it seems to me, what with daily lectures and literary tasks on hand, and all the interruptions which you know about so well. But I would not

thank you for your sweet and most cheering remembrance before reading every poem over, whether I remembered it well or not. And this has been a great pleasure to me, for you write from your heart and reach all hearts. My wife wanted me to read one, — a special favorite of my own, "The Witch of Wenham," but I told her, "No," — I knew I should break down before I got through with it, for it made me tearful again, as it did the first time I read it.

I was going to say, I thank you, but I would say rather, I thank God that He has given you the thoughts and feelings which sing themselves as naturally as the wood-thrush rings his silver bell, — to steal your own exquisitely descriptive line. Who has preached the gospel of love to such a mighty congregation as you have preached it? Who has done so much to sweeten the soul of Calvinistic New England? You have your reward here in the affection with which all our people, who are capable of loving anybody, regard you. I trust you will find a still higher, in that world, the harmonies of which find an echo in so many of your songs.

Whittier used whatever influence he possessed in securing for Bayard Taylor the nomination to be ambassador of the United States at Berlin, which was tendered him by President Hayes, early in 1878. Taylor died at his post in Berlin, in December of the same year. The last letter from him found among the papers of Mr. Whittier is one from which the following extract is made, dated

New York, February 20, 1878: "I return heartfelt thanks for the greeting and blessing. The nomination comes just when I can turn it to the service of my most important literary work, — and I gladly accept it for that reason alone. But the response to it, not only by our true friends, but really by the whole country, is the best honor it gives. I am very grateful for this."

We come now to the last letter sent by Whittier to the friend he loved so dearly, and it cheered the last hours of the dying man.[1] It was dated November 27, 1878: —

"I have just got 'Prince Deukalion.' It is a great poem — how great I hardly dare venture to say. To me it recalls the great dramas of the immortal Greeks — not so much in resemblance, as in its solemnity and power. I rejoice that such a poem is thine. I was glad to hear from Osgood, a few days ago, that thy health was rapidly improving. We all feel an interest in the good news. Do not trouble thyself to answer this note. I know how thy time must be occupied. I only wanted to say how I am impressed by thy new poem, and to utter the old prayer, never out of place: 'God bless thee!'"

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

I hear nothing from thee directly. I read thy political papers with a rather confusing sense of admiration and regret, wonder and pride in the

[1] "This letter, received shortly before the end came, gave my husband unspeakable pleasure. It was the only praise of his drama which reached him after publication of it.

"MARIE TAYLOR."

power exhibited, but with frequent misgivings as to the justice of some of thy strictures. For myself, I do not feel called upon to enter into these present contests. The game seems to me hardly worth the candle. The issues seem small and poor. I suppose I am growing old, and am disposed to ask for peace in my day. I have had enough of fighting in the old days.

TO GERTRUDE WHITTIER CARTLAND.

12th mo., 16, 1878.

I am glad you have had Edwin Arnold's poem, "He who died at Azan," to offset "Omar Khayyám." The latter is a fierce revolt against the fatalism of Calvinism of the Moslem creed, by one who had been taught that there was no other and better revelation of God than the letter of the Koran. "The One who died at Azan" looked from that letter to the spiritual intimations of immortality. I know of nothing ancient or modern which is so filled with a robust and satisfying faith as this little poem.

TO HARRIET P. FOWLER.

Oak Knoll, 1878.

I was very happy to get thy beautiful flowers, in perfect order, last night — the Dutchman's nether integuments included! My little study is made gorgeous with them. I am glad thee are able to enjoy this charming weather — this wonderful spring — after thy long illness. I hope thee will be able to ride up to our place some time. It is lovely now — the emerald of the lawn, the pear

and peach and cherry bloom, the yellow clusters of the sycamore maples, and the white glory of the magnolias. The love of natural beauty with me seems to grow stronger as I grow older.

"The Vision of Echard, and Other Poems," was published in 1878. It included "The Witch of Wenham," "Sunset on the Bearcamp," and ten other poems. Among them was "The Henchman," sent to Mr. Howells, for the "Atlantic," in February, 1877, with this note: —

"Mr. Lathrop wrote me in regard to a bit of rhyme (which I wrote off-hand for a young friend) [1] which Mr. Osgood wishes to set to music. I am doubtful about it being worthy of a place in the magazine, and besides, it is quite out of my line. If you think it will do, however, I will not object. It will perhaps need no title. I called it 'The Henchman's Song,' but the first line of the first verse will answer as well."

He recalled this poem from the "Atlantic," for some reason, and several months afterwards sent it to the "Independent," in which it was published,

[1] Mrs. Jettie Morrill Wason, daughter of Hon. George W. Morrill, of Amesbury, neighbors and dear friends of Mr. Whittier. Miss Morrill said to him one day, when they were summering on the Bearcamp, "Mr. Whittier, you never wrote a love song. I do not believe you *can* write one. I would like to have you try to write one for me to sing." He handed her *The Henchman's Song* the next day, and it was first sung by the charming young lady for whom it was written. One other poem was written for her, and this also was written at his favorite summer resort, West Ossipee. The first boat placed in the Bearcamp waters was named the Jettie, in honor of Miss Morrill, and the *Voyage of the Jettie* commemorated the event.

December 20, 1877. This note to Dr. Ward, the editor, went with it: —

"I send, in compliance with the wish of Mr. Bowen and thyself, a ballad upon which, though not long, I have bestowed a good deal of labor. It is not exactly a Quakerly piece, nor is it didactic, and it has no moral that I know of. But it is, I think, *natural*, simple, and not unpoetical."

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

DANVERS, 3d mo., 7, 1879.

Back from my home in Amesbury. What a pity it is that we cannot shut down the gate, and let the weary wheels rest awhile! For myself, I have to work hard to be idle; I have to make it a matter of duty to ignore duty; and amuse myself with simple stories, play with dogs and cattle, and talk nonsense. Dr. Bowditch says that a man of active brain ought to make a fool of himself occasionally, and unbend, at all hazards to his dignity. But to some of us life is too serious, and its responsibilities too awful, for such a remedy. The unsolved mystery presses hard upon us.

TO HARRIET M. PITMAN.

1879.

I am greatly pained to hear of the illness of our old friend Garrison. For how many years he has been an important part of our world! Much of my own life was shaped by him. It is very sad to think I shall see him no more. The next mail may bring tidings of his death. I have been thinking over my life, and the survey has not been

encouraging. Alas! if I have been a servant at all I have been an unprofitable one, and yet I have loved goodness, and longed to bring my imaginative poetic temperament into true subjection. I stand ashamed and almost despairing before holy and pure ideals. As I read the New Testament I feel how weak, irresolute, and frail I am, and how little I can rely on anything save our God's mercy and infinite compassion, which I reverently and thankfully own have followed me through life, and the assurance of which is my sole ground of hope for myself, and for those I love and pray for.

The following letter to Lydia Maria Child was written upon Mr. Whittier's return from the Yearly Meeting of Friends, held in Portland, in June, 1879. The Pocasset tragedy, to which it refers, was the insane act of a father, who killed his child in emulation of Abraham's intended sacrifice of Isaac: —

"Returning from our Yearly Meeting, I was glad to welcome once more thy handwriting. I did not see thee at our dear Garrison's funeral. Was thee there? It was a most impressive occasion. Phillips outdid himself, and Theodore Weld, under the stress of powerful emotion, renewed that marvelous eloquence which, in the early days of anti-slavery, shamed the church and silenced the mob. I never heard anything more beautiful and more moving. Garrison's faith in the continuity of life was very positive. He trusted more to the phenomena of spiritualism than I can, however. My faith is not helped by them, and yet I wish I

could see *truth* in them. I do believe, apart from all outward signs, in the future life, and that the happiness of that life, as of this, will consist in labor and self-sacrifice. In this sense, as thee say, 'there is no death.' I trust with thee that the wretched Pocasset horror will teach all honest expounders the folly and danger of going back to the stone age for models of right living. I am shocked by the barbarism and superstition of our popular faith. There needs another George Fox, with broader vision, to call men from the death of the letter to the life of the spirit, and to tread under foot the ghastly and bloody materialism which survives among us."

TO DOROTHEA L. DIX.

28th, 7th mo., 1879.

I thank thee for the curious Abyssinian book, which will be returned with this note. How strange! King *Theodore's* bible! It recalls the wonder with which I read, when a boy, Bruce's Travels to the source of the Nile. I cannot recall the Arabic inscription I referred to, for the fountain, and have written one myself, taking it for granted that the fountain was to be thy gift, though thee did not say so. Such a gift would not be inappropriate from one who all her life has been opening fountains in the desert of human suffering — who, to use Scripture phrase, has "passed over the dry valley of Baca, making it a well."

Stranger and traveler!
Drink freely, and bestow
A kindly thought on her,
Who bade this fountain flow,

Yet hath for it no claim
Save as the minister
Of blessing in God's name.

TO CHARLOTTE FISKE BATES.

1879.

I suppose nine out of ten of really thoughtful people, were they to express their real feeling, would speak much as thee do, of the mingled "dread and longing" with which they look forward to the inevitable surrender of life. Of course, temperament and present surroundings have much influence with us. There are some self-satisfied souls who, as Charles Lamb says, "can stalk into futurity on stilts," but there are more Fearings and Despondencys than Greathearts in view of the "loss of all we know." I have heard Garrison talk much of his faith in Spiritualism. He had no doubts whatever, and he was very happy. Death was to him but the passing from one room to another and higher one. But his *facts* did not convince me. I am slow to believe new things, and in a matter of such tremendous interest, I want "assurance doubly sure." I wonder whether, if I could see a real ghost, I should believe my own senses. I do sometimes feel very near to dear ones who have left me — perhaps they are with me then. I am sure they would be, if it were possible. Of one thing I feel sure: that something outside of myself speaks to me, and holds me to duty; warns, reproves, and approves. It is good, for it requires me to be good; it is wise, for it knows the thoughts and intents of the heart. It is to me a revelation of God, and of his character and attributes: the

one important *fact*, before which all others seem insignificant. I have seen little or nothing of what is called Spiritualism: I do not think its fruits have always been good; but the best things may be abused and counterfeited. . . . I wish there were a possibility of knowing what it really is.

I have no longer youth and strength, and I have not much to hope for, as far as this life is concerned; but I enjoy life: "It is a pleasant thing to behold the sun." I love Nature in her varied aspects; and, as I grow older, I find much to love in my fellow-creatures, and also more to pity. I have the instinct of immortality, but the conditions of that life are unknown. I cannot conceive what my own identity and that of dear ones gone before me will be. And then the unescapable sense of sin in thought and deed, and doubtless some misconception of the character of God, makes the boldest of us cowards. Does thee remember the epitaph-prayer of Martin Elginbrod?

> "Here lie I, Martin Elginbrod;
> Have pity on my soul, Lord God,
> As I wad do were I Lord God
> An' ye were Martin Elginbrod."

I think there is a volume of comfort in that verse. We Christians seem less brave and tranquil, in view of death, than the old Stoic sages. Witness Marcus Antoninus. I wonder if the creed of Christendom is really the "glad tidings of great joy to all people" which the angels sang of. For myself, I believe in God as Justice, Goodness, Tenderness — in one word, Love; and yet, my trust in Him is not strong enough to overcome the natural

shrinking from the law of death. Even our Master prayed that that cup might pass from Him, "if it were possible."

TO MARY ROGERS KIMBALL.[1]

8th mo., 3, 1879.

I am very glad to hear from thee and thy excellent mother. I have a very pleasant recollection of the visit thee speak of at the farm, a little out of the village of Plymouth, and also of my first visit at thy father's house in the village, with George Thompson, in 1835. How far back it seems! As I muse over the past, I always recall thy father with affectionate memory of his life and labors. He was very dear to me — a man whom to know was to love. His collected editorials are always at hand, with the fine picture of his beautiful and expressive face. I am thankful that I can still enjoy much, that Nature is as beautiful to me as ever, that I have many dear friends left, and that I hope to meet those who have gone before, — Sumner, Garrison, Wilson, Greeley, Chase, Tappan, and others of anti-slavery renown who have passed away. Give my love to thy dear mother, and accept for thyself the affectionate regard of thine and thy father's friend.

TO LUCY LARCOM.

At the Bearcamp, 8th mo., 1879.

I am feeling sadly about Horace.[2] But he is only going the common way of all, sooner or later,

[1] Daughter of N. P. Rogers.

[2] Horace H. Currier, a dear friend of Whittier, who died within a few weeks of the writing of this letter.

and "who knoweth which is best?" I have reached an age when the shadow of the Eternal World rests upon all the pictures of this, and the thought of the "last time" mingles with all greetings and farewells. My life has been marked by undeserved blessings, and my prayer is that the mercies of our Heavenly Father, which endure forever, may be extended to me still — in life or death.

TO SARAH ORNE JEWETT.

1879.

I am glad to get thy charming book from thy own hand. I have read "Deephaven" over half a dozen times, and always with gratitude to thee for such a book — so simple, pure, and so true to nature. And "Old Friends and New" I shall certainly read as often. When tired and worried I resort to thy books and find rest and refreshing. I recommend them to everybody, and everybody likes them. There is no dissenting opinion; and already thousands whom thee have never seen love the author as well as her books.

TO OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

DANVERS, 12th mo., 17, 1879.

Thy note received the evening before my birthday made me very happy. Among the many kind greetings which reach me on this anniversary, thine has been most welcome, for a word of praise from thee is prized more highly than all, though I do not undervalue any one's love or friendship. I have often since I met thee in Boston thought of thy remark that we four singers seem to be iso-

lated — set apart as it were — in lonely companionship, garlanded as if for sacrifice, the world about us waiting to see who first shall falter in his song, who first shall pass out of the sunshine into the great shadow! There is something pathetic in it all. I feel like clasping closer the hands of my companions. I realize more and more that fame and notoriety can avail little in our situation; that love is the one essential thing, always welcome, outliving time and change, and going with us into the unguessed possibilities of death. There is nothing so sweet in the old Bible as the declaration that "God is Love." I am no Calvinist, but I feel in looking over my life — double-motived and full of failures — that I cannot rely upon word or work of mine to offset sins and shortcomings, but upon Love alone.

Dear H., we began together in Buckingham's "Magazine," and together we are keeping step in the "Atlantic." Not evenly, indeed, for thy step is lighter and freer than mine. How many who began with us have fallen by the way! The cypress shadows lie dark about us, but I think thee contrive to keep in the low westering sunshine more than I can. A dear cousin of mine, a lady of fine culture — Gertrude Whittier Cartland — who has been for some years clerk of the Women's Yearly Meeting of our Friends' Society, writes me: "I thought the poem of Dr. Holmes touchingly beautiful — such an undertone of tender thoughtfulness, not to be silenced by the strains of surface gratulations or flattery. I place 'The Iron Gate' beside Bryant's 'Flood of Years' and

Longfellow's 'Morituri Salutamus.'" God bless thee, old friend and comrade!

TO EDMUND C. STEDMAN.

12th mo., 31, 1879.

I have been looking over thy beautiful volume. I was familiar with a large number of the poems, but many were entirely new to me. It is a collection of which any poet might well be proud. While I admire the strength and power of the elegiac poems, and the war pieces, I am especially charmed with the graceful and tender idyls. . . . My work, such as it is, is done. Thine has only begun; but its present achievement makes the future success sure. Indeed, if thee never write another stanza, thy place is assured in American literature, as the worthy successor of Bryant. There is one poem in thy volume which has the stamp of immortality upon it. "The Discoverer" has always seemed to me one of the most striking and powerfully suggestive poems of our time.

TO GERTRUDE WHITTIER CARTLAND.

2d mo., 23, 1880.

I inclose Professor Swing's last sermon, which I think will interest thee. I hope to be in Amesbury next week, but must go first to Boston. I also send Dr. Meredith's article in the "Alliance," on the "Proposition of United Prayer for the Conversion of Satan." The old Catholic saint and schoolman once tried this, praying for three days and nights continuously for the Devil's conversion, and rose up at last with the hope that

he had succeeded. Augustine Jones's article on Moses Brown is a very clear and full account of that remarkable man. It recalled to me the picture of him as I saw him in 1833 or '34, when I read to him, at his request, the "Speech of the Premier on the Passage of the Emancipation Act in England." He must have been then in his ninety-fourth or ninety-fifth year.

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

2d mo., 20, 1880.

I am old enough to be done with work, only that I feel that my best words have not been said after all, that what has been said is not its full expression. All is incomplete, and I must wait for the fresh, strong life of immortality, in the hope that through the mercy of Him who "knoweth our frame" and our weaknesses, I may be enabled to do better with the talent He has given me than I have done.

TO JAMES T. FIELDS.

3d mo., 17, 1880.

A friend gives me a sad account of ——. His property is under a mortgage of more than it will sell for, and the poor fellow is helplessly sick and discouraged. He has a large family, and when the bank forecloses, he will have no shelter. We "literary fellows" are none of us rich, but can we not do something for him? Curtis and Holland, Clemens and Warner, I am sure would do what they could, and we of Boston and vicinity would, I think, help a little. He was foolish in his exper-

iment, but I pardon a great deal to a lover of beauty who tries to make his spot of earth beautiful. Of course the thing must be done with delicate regard to his feelings, if at all. If we could raise $4000 or $5000 it would put a roof over his head at least. Can we not throw a plank to the drowning man? Think of it. Life is slipping away from us fast, and we must do our little good while we can. The trouble is, there are so many hard cases, so many sad appeals made to us, that we can do but little in any one direction.[1] I inclose a bit of rhyme ["The Minister's Daughter"] which I do not pretend is poetry, but the grimmest kind of realism. I feel it a duty to remind the extravagant eulogists of the old Calvinism of some of its doings.

TO JAMES R. OSGOOD.[2]

22d, 7th mo., 1880.

I have looked over thy list of noteworthy events, but have concluded to take as subject for a poem the missive of Charles II. to Governor Endicott, in 1661, sent by Samuel Shattuck, a Quaker, of Salem, forbidding the further persecution of the Quakers. Shattuck had been banished from the country on pain of death, went to Eng-

[1] Mr. Whittier presented this case to Mr. George W. Childs, who at once promised $1000. Whittier offered $250. The person to be relieved was not one with whom he was personally acquainted.

[2] This letter was written in answer to a call for a poem for the *Memorial History of Boston*. In the first volume of this work, "The King's Missive" was placed at the opening, fully illustrated.

land, and was made the king's agent to convey the royal mandate to Massachusetts. It may make from a hundred to a hundred and twenty lines. I do not know whether it should have a place in the first or second volume — probably the incident would be in the second.

Upon the appearance of the ballad "The King's Missive," there was a discussion as to its historical accuracy, at a meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and Rev. Dr. George E. Ellis, of Boston, afterward read a paper before that society to show that the letter of Charles II. did not have the effect ascribed to it in the ballad; that it did not require and did not bring about a general jail delivery, but requested that one class of imprisoned Quakers should be sent to England for trial, which was not complied with. Incidentally, Dr. Ellis spoke of the Quakers as glorying in their persecution, and inviting it by their seditious and indecent behavior. To this paper Mr. Whittier made reply in an article sent to the Boston "Advertiser," in March, 1881, which is given in the Appendix to this work as a specimen of his vigorous prose style.

TO SYDNEY HOWARD GAY.

9th mo., 24, 1880.

In 1838, I was in Philadelphia, editor of the Pennsylvania "Freeman," and my office was burned with Pennsylvania Hall. I was by the side of thy wife's father, Daniel Neall, who presided at the anti-slavery meeting the night before

the burning, while the mob was pressing in at the doors, and the glass of the broken windows was shattered over him. I have never forgotten the dignity and firmness with which he held his place on that occasion. . . . I am glad of an opportunity to express my thanks for the justice done to the early Friends in thy history. Rev. Dr. Ellis of Boston has written an article for the new "History of Boston," in which he labors to show that the Quakers were as much to blame for being hanged as the Puritans were for hanging them. Give my regards to thy wife, and tell her that I have just had a visit from her brother and Edward Wright. It was very pleasant to talk over with them the old days of the anti-slavery struggle, and the dear friends with whom we acted.

TO ELIZABETH S. JONES.

10th mo., 23d, 1880.

Thanks for the Swinburne "Tragedy of the Footstool."[1] Browning's rugged verse and Swinburne's marvelous rhythmic felicities are perfectly reproduced, and the comical absurdity of the action of the piece is irresistibly droll. I think I would send Browning a copy. I am sure he would enjoy it. How it would have delighted our dear friend, Bayard Taylor! . . . Have the leaves in the vicinity of Portland taken on the autumn tints? Here they are scarcely changed, and I fear the display this year will be a poor one. But the asters and

[1] A satirical poem, by Miss Jones, published in the *Portland Press*, reproducing the styles of Browning and Swinburne, which was highly praised by Browning, when at Whittier's suggestion a copy was sent to him.

gentians and goldenrod are abundant, and I never tire of them, glorifying as they do every winding roadside and rocky pasture slope of New England. The hardy little harebell still blossoms in the Oak Knoll grounds, as it does on the banks of the Merrimac, in Amesbury.

TO HIS NIECE, MRS. PICKARD.

DANVERS, 11th mo., 29, 1880.

I thought of thee on Thanksgiving Day, and wondered if thee was at the table. It was a rather dull day to me, for on such occasions I always think of the old days in Amesbury, when my mother and sister were with me. Thy friend B. has written me saying he is done with politics. He feels rather sore about his defeat; but I told him I had been in the same predicament as a Free-Soil candidate for Congress, and got abused worse than he did, for I was charged with ill-treating my wife!

In 1880, Mr. Whittier wrote an introduction for a volume entitled "William Lloyd Garrison and His Times." In the same year his "River Path" appeared as one of the four poems in "Christmastide." "The King's Missive," which originally appeared in "The Memorial History of Boston," was published, with other poems, in 1881. The history of one of these poems, "The Jubilee Singers," is as follows: —

In November, 1879, the Jubilee Singers of the Fisk University called upon Mr. Whittier, and were received in the "garden room" at Amesbury.

The interview was much enjoyed by the poet as well as by the singers. He was interested in the romantic story of their successes in Europe; there they had sung before seven kings and emperors, and had dined with Gladstone, but on returning to this country they had been driven from a hotel at midnight because they were black. As they were about to leave Mr. Whittier they sang several of their sweetest songs, ending with "Swing low, sweet chariot," and the benediction, —

> "The Lord bless thee and keep thee,
> The Lord make his face shine upon thee,
> And be gracious unto thee,
> The Lord lift up his countenance
> Upon thee, and give thee peace. Amen."

He listened with bowed head, and tears rolled down his cheeks. Mr. Loudin says: "It was with great difficulty we could sing, so deeply were we touched by the experience of the hour now closing. I shall never forget the expression upon that illumined face at that parting moment. Whittier stepped forward and shook hands, but so deep were his feelings that he spoke no word until he came to the last, when he said, 'God bless you all! Good-by.'" The next morning he wrote four stanzas in their album, to which he afterward added two more, and gave the title "The Jubilee Singers."

The poem "Abram Morrison" was written for a little paper called "The Social Banner," issued in aid of a charitable fair in Amesbury, in 1884. The paper was to be printed on Monday, and not a line of the poem was written on Saturday. When

one of the lady managers of the fair received the manuscript early Monday morning, she had the curiosity to ask when it was composed, hinting her opinion that Whittier had stayed at home from meeting on First day to write it. But he assured her that he attended meeting and made his usual calls that day, and left her to infer that the lines about the Irish Quaker were composed in the meeting, where it would be easy to conjure up a reminiscent image of Friend Morrison, as in this stanza: —

> "Still, in memory, on his feet,
> Leaning o'er the elders' seat,
> Mingling with a solemn drone
> Celtic accents all his own,
> Rises Abram Morrison."

This guess is the only foundation for the statement that he sometimes composed his verses in the quiet of the Friends' meeting, unless we except the case of "Laus Deo," elsewhere mentioned.

To an inquiry about the legend of the Greenleaf family referred to in "A Name," Mr. Whittier wrote: —

"I have for a long time heard the tradition of it. In the Genealogy of the Greenleaf family occurs this passage: 'From all that can be gathered it is believed that the ancestors of the Greenleaf family were Huguenots, who left France on account of their religious principles in the course of the sixteenth century, and settled in England. The name was probably translated from the French *Feuillevert*.' Marot was a somewhat celebrated French poet of the sixteenth century. He was in-

clined to the Protestant faith, and wrote the hymns of the Huguenots. I am not sure that the old Greenleaf embarked from the port of St. Malo; but as that was the port from whence many of the persecuted exiles came, I took the liberty of using it in my verse. I inclose an interesting account of the French Acadians, in the Madawaska region, in which the habit of the people in changing their names for the English equivalent is mentioned — just as 'Feuillevert' became 'Greenleaf.' The writer says: 'They have a singular fancy for Anglicizing their names. At the Grand Falls, Napoleon Bois figures on a sign as Napoleon Woods; Le Blanc becomes White, St. Pierre St. Peter, and Fabien becomes Do-Well.' "

TO HARRIET MINOT PITMAN.

1st mo., 1881.

I am much concerned for the poor colored people who are crowding into Kansas in this bitter winter. I think they better stay in their old homes, but it will not do to let them starve and freeze. There is great need of money and clothing. Our Quaker friend Elizabeth L. Comstock is working hard at Topeka, and doing a great deal with comparatively small means. How much of sin and want and pain there is in the world! I wonder if it is all necessary, — if it cannot be helped. The terrible mystery sometimes oppresses me, but I hold fast my faith in God's goodness and the ultimate triumph of that goodness. I know in my own experience that some things which seemed evil have proved good, or the means of good.

TO CELIA THAXTER.[1]

1st mo., 18, 1881.

What wonderful pictures you will bring home to hang in the gallery of memory! I am sorry you did not see more of the Alps, but I have known people to go hunting all over Switzerland for weeks and not find them. I do not care at all to see Rome, or Paris, or London. . . . Thy graphic description of the storm at Appledore made me sorry I was not there to see it, and in the evening to sit with you by your pleasant flowers and drift-wood fire. I remember the storm thee speak of. The touching story of the child's burial must not be omitted in "the book" which, as the Orientals say, it is thy kismet, or destiny, to write some time. The lines quoted by thee are resonant with all sea-sounds. I like the rain calming the sea, —

> "till sullenly plunged the surges
> Leaden and deadly white where the crests broke afar
> in the distance."

Will thee hand this "Pickwick" to thy good brothers? Just look at the picture of Mr. P.'s trial and Sergeant Buzfuz pleading for that injured innocent, Mrs. Bardell. Tell Oscar my niece is proud and happy with her loon's feather.

TO GERTRUDE WHITTIER CARTLAND.

1st mo., 26, 1881.

I expected to hear of William Ashby's speedy departure. I have known him for nearly fifty years, — an upright, honest man, and a constant and active friend of the oppressed. Remember

[1] Upon her return from Europe.

me to his wife, and assure her of my sympathy. Her husband will leave an honorable memory behind him. His love of flowers and of all natural beauty was a marked characteristic, and he was always a gentleman, courteous and affable.

TO ELIZABETH (NEALL) GAY.

1st mo., 27, 1881.

When February opens I shall feel as if winter was losing its iron grip. The long nights are tedious, especially to one who can't sleep soundly. I always envied Maryatt's "Peter Simple," who could "bear a great deal of sleep." I cannot read in the evening, and not long in the daytime. . . . I have friends in Florida who supply me bountifully with its golden fruit. I only wish their atmosphere came with the oranges. . . . A note from George William Curtis mentioned spending an evening with you a few days ago. It must be exceedingly pleasant to have him for a neighbor. He tells me that Mr. Gay is writing the Life of Edmund Quincy, of which I am very glad. He can and will do justice to the cause to which Quincy devoted his fine talents, and in which he himself bore a brave and self-sacrificing part. I have been suffering for some weeks with a lame knee — a sprain, I suppose — and for the first time in my life have found a cane necessary; and even with that I am mostly confined to the house. I enjoy books and friends, and my interest in public affairs is active. I have to see a great many people, who contrive to get to me, though I am a part of the time in my old home in Amesbury. They

are mostly strangers, but my friends in Boston, Dr. Holmes and others, do not forget me. I had a pleasant visit from Phillips Brooks and Archdeacon Farrar, when the latter was in the country last fall.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

March 6, 1881.

I have sweetened this Sunday afternoon by reading the poems in the precious little volume you sent me a few days ago. Some were new to me, — others, as you ought to know, are well known. I have not forgotten your kind words for my evening breakfast. If you happen to have seen an article in the March — or was it February? — "North American," you will have noticed, it may be, my reference to "The Minister's Daughter," and to yourself as preaching the Gospel of Love to a larger congregation than any minister addresses. I never rise from any of your poems without feeling the refreshment of their free and sweet atmosphere. I may find more perfume in one than in another, — as one does in passing from one flowery field into the next. I may find more careful planting in this or in that, as in different garden-beds, but there is always the morning air of a soul that breathes freely, and always the fragrance of a loving spirit. Again that sweetest "Minister's Daughter" brought the tears into my eyes — and out of them. Again I read with emotion that generous tribute ["The Lost Occasion"] to the man whom living we so longed to admire without a reservation — of whom, dead, you write

with such a noble humanity. I must not speak too warmly of the lines whose kindness I feel so deeply, only wishing I had deserved such a tribute better. But of the poem which comes next, "Garrison," I can speak, and I will say that it has the strenuous tone, the grave music of your highest mood, — which I believe is the truest and best expression of the New England inner life which it has ever found, at least in versified utterance. I have forgotten to thank you for remembering me, — and especially for the way in which you remember me, for I did not miss the words which made my blood warm, as I read them on the fly-leaf. Let me say — for it means more than you can know — that no written or printed words come into our household on which my wife, a very true-hearted woman, looks with so much interest as on yours.

TO FRANCES C. SPARHAWK.

4th mo., 2, 1881.

I like the "Little Pilgrim's" story better than Dante's picture of Heaven, — an old man sitting eternally on a high chair, and concentric circles of saints, martyrs, and ordinary church members, whirling around him in perpetual gyration, and singing "Glory!" Ah, me! it is idle to speculate on these things. All I ask for is to be free from sin, and to meet the dear ones again. . . . I have just sent a poem ["Rabbi Ishmael"] to the "Atlantic," which perhaps nobody will like. But I do, and that is enough, as I wrote it to free my mind.

TO MARSHALL P. HALL, MANCHESTER.

5th mo., 11, 1881.

The lady of the poem "Among the Hills" was purely imaginary. I was charmed with the scenery in Tamworth and West Ossipee, and tried to call attention to it in a story. My old haunt there, the Bearcamp House, is burned down, much to my regret. . . . I hope another house will be built on its site. With the long range of the Sandwich Mountains and Chocorua on one hand, and the rugged masses of Ossipee on the other, it is really one of the most picturesque situations in the State. I think thy wife may well be proud of her native hills.

In the summer of 1881, Mr. Whittier spent several weeks with his cousins, Joseph and Gertrude W. Cartland, at Intervale, N. H., and continued to be their summer companion among the hills during the remaining twelve years of his life. In this charming spot he greatly enjoyed the utter quiet of the long meadow levels and the mountains beyond, watching the snow streaks on Mount Washington, and wishing he could see it all covered as in winter. The pine woods, near the hotel, more like the "forest primeval" than can often be found in places so much frequented by summer guests, were a favorite resort, where, with the underbrush cleared away by his own hand, and rustic seats prepared, he spent a part of nearly every day, with a group of friends, in the unconventional social intercourse which he always so highly prized.

When traveling, his eyes insisted upon seeing every landscape on the route, and studying the faces of his fellow-travelers. Hence railway traveling was found very fatiguing, especially in a region with which he was not perfectly familiar. After passing through the Notch of the White Mountains, on a railroad train, he spoke of the experience as one which he never wished to repeat; contrasting it with the leisurely passage of a stage-coach through the Notch some years before, which he greatly enjoyed. He rarely entered a railroad car without passing through it to take a view of his fellow-passengers, and if anything struck him as odd or amusing he was sure to observe and refer to it afterward. He took a sympathetic interest in every phase of humanity. At the summer hotels he was often to be seen on the piazza when trains and stages arrived and departed, and without any apparent inquisitiveness his keen eyes took note of everything, and his shrewd and humorous comments upon the events of the day were the delight of those privileged with his intimacy.

Mr. Whittier did not care to ascend mountains for the prospect they afforded. When asked if he had ever viewed Lake Winnepesaukee and its surroundings from Red Hill, he said he had never any desire to do so; that he once looked down upon the scene from a neighboring hill and found it had lost its impressiveness. Boulders had become pebbles, great trees seemed as scraggy bushes, and the lake itself a mere pond. The whole scene was dwarfed, its grandeur lost.

Whenever Mr. Whittier was stopping at a hotel,

other guests had the opportunity to meet him in the parlors, or upon the piazzas, for he never secluded himself. When in a public room, he made it a rule to devote his time to those who wished to converse with him.

"What do people live on here?" asked Mr. Whittier in a little settlement among the mountains, where nobody seemed to be doing anything. "They live by keeping quiet," was the reply; and this was a neighborhood the poet loved to visit. He said he disliked, when he was himself taking a rest, to come upon busy people, and he was once annoyed by noticing that a blacksmith was setting up his forge near the hotel where he was spending his summer. But he said he found he need not worry — the man got nothing to do!

To a young lady, an invalid, who had gone to the mountains for her health, he wrote: —

"I hope thee will like the place and be benefited. But nobody gets well who has to dress for dinner. Thee should have taken only a single dress and worn it all the time, and take no thought wherewithal thee shall be clothed. That 's the way."

His fondness for children and young people was a marked trait in his character. The young people of Amesbury were always welcome guests at his home, and he was seldom too busy to lay aside his work for a few moments' pleasant talk. During his many summerings at West Ossipee, accompanied by his niece, he generally invited some of her Amesbury friends to join them, and nothing could be more charming than to see him surrounded by a bevy of young girls, listening to their merri-

ment, arranging for their excursions, telling them stories, calling their attention to good books, and in all possible ways planning for their amusement and profit. Several of his poems, such as "Neighbor Acres," "How they climbed Chocorua,"[1] "Voyage of the Jettie," "The Seeking of the Waterfall," and "The Henchman," some of which have never been published, were written for their amusement or at their suggestion. Later on, wherever Mr. Whittier chanced to be, — whether at Holderness, Danvers, or Newburyport, — he soon gathered a flock of young people around him, in whom he took a lively interest, and who have never ceased to appreciate gratefully the influence of his beautiful life.

TO GRACE GREENWOOD.

8th mo., 1881.

It is a dark, rainy day — one of the most *canine* of the dog-days. But in our "garden room" the flower-vases remind us of the green places visited in the sunshine of the last few days. Will they not be familiar, too, to thee? Here are graceful bluebells from the Merrimac bank near the Chain Bridge; gorgeous goldenrod from the picturesque and quiet Salisbury burial-ground hill; sweet white cones of the water-bush, from the woods near the Salisbury beach; splendid spikes of the cardinal flower from the banks of the Powow River; and others suggestive of equally interesting localities.

[1] This poem, not elsewhere published, is in *Whittier-Land*, as are also several other poems composed for the amusement of friends, and never before published.

where we twa hae talked and laughed and moralized together.

TO EDMUND C. STEDMAN.

8th mo., 7, 1881.

I have just been re-reading thy magnificent "Corda Concordia," and I cannot deny myself the satisfaction of pronouncing it the best occasional poem of the last quarter of a century. There is not a weak or superfluous verse in it; not too much or too little; it stands complete. I dare say others more competent to speak than myself have told thee this before, but I must acknowledge the very great pleasure which it has given me. It has the antique beauty of the old Masters of Song, while it gives utterance to the earnest but reverent spirit of an age of Question.

TO KATHERINE H. AUSTIN.

8th mo., 10, 1881.

I shall be glad to do all in my power to open the doors of Brown University to women. I inclose a note to Richard Atwater which I will thank thee to forward to him. Of course the world is growing better; the Lord reigns; our old planet is wheeling slowly into fuller light. I despair of nothing good. All will come in due time that is really needed. All we have to do is to work — and wait.

TO RICHARD ATWATER.

I hope the time is not far distant when Brown University will be open to woman. The traditions of the noble old institution are all in favor of broad liberality and equality of rights and privi-

leges. The state of my health and the increasing weight of years may prevent me from taking an active part in the matter, but it would be a great satisfaction to give my voice in behalf of a measure which I feel certain would redound to the honor, and materially promote the prosperity, of the college. Brown University cannot afford to hesitate much longer in a matter, like this, of simple justice. No one who has felt the pulse of public opinion can doubt that the time has come when a liberal educational policy irrespective of sex is not only a duty, but a necessity.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

October 18, 1881.

I have worn the same glasses for twenty years. I am getting somewhat hard of hearing — "slightly deaf," the newspapers inform me, with that polite attention to a personal infirmity which is characteristic of the newspaper press. The dismantling of the human organism is a gentle process more obvious to those who look on than to those who are the subjects of it. It brings some solaces with it; deafness is a shield; infirmity makes those around us helpful; incapacity unloads our shoulders; and imbecility, if it must come, is always preceded by the administration of one of nature's opiates. It is a good deal that we older writers, whose names are often mentioned together, should have passed the Psalmist's limit of active life, and yet have an audience when we speak or sing. I wish you all the blessings you have asked for me — how much better you deserve them!

TO MRS. MARY F. ROGERS.

11th mo., 29, 1881.

I hear that thy birthday comes early in the next month, a little before mine; and I cannot let the occasion pass without sending a word of greeting from an old friend of thine and of thy dear and good husband, whose memory is kept green by all who knew him personally, or who felt the inspiration of his genius, and the noble example of his self-sacrificing devotion to the cause of freedom. How vividly I recall the visit which dear George Thompson and myself made at your beautiful home in the village of Plymouth, more than forty years ago! We left you then to fall into the hands of the mob at Concord, and escaped only after rough handling. What a "certain sound" rang out from the bugle of his "Herald of Freedom"! How it cheered us in the long, hard struggle! To have had the heart-felt friendship of such a man is to me, in the late afternoon of life, a very precious memory. To thee, dear friend, his loved companion, his memory is a priceless legacy. I am almost alone now — most of my relations and old friends have passed onward. But I love to recall my fellow-workers and the old anti-slavery days. I hope thee are in comfortable health, and that thy last years may be blest.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

12th mo., 18, 1881.

It was most kind in thee to send the flowers, and my heart thanks thee more than any pen can. These mile-stones at my age are rather serious

things, and happy is he who in passing them sees them as I have done, wreathed with flowers, symbols and prophecies of the immortality of love and friendship.

TO ELIZABETH S. JONES.

12th mo., 19, 1881.

I spent my birthday quietly and soberly with two old friends who dined with me. I confess I do not *enjoy* these anniversaries. They are solemn reminders of the inevitable end; and I love this old world of ours, and the sweet familiar scenes and dear human faces, too well to be quite ready to leave them. But all as God wills. I will trust and wait.

TO SARAH ORNE JEWETT.

Danvers, 2d mo., 1882.

I wonder how I can reconcile myself to the old, customary life here, after my pleasant stay in Boston, and our delightful companionship there. I cannot make thee understand how grateful and refreshing it all was and how much I thank thee for it. I did not leave the city until Thursday morning. My brother has been very ill, but is now somewhat, though I fear not permanently, better. The last of our family, he is a kind, unselfish man, whose way of life has been hard and difficult. For the last fifteen years he has been connected with the Naval Office in Boston. . . . I must tell thee how much I have enjoyed that quéer, good "Vicar of Hermanstow."[1] I have seen nothing so good for a long time. For it, and for much more, I thank thee.

[1] By S. Baring Gould.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

3d mo., 24, 1882.

With regard to modern Spiritualism I have had a feeling that it was not safe or healthful for mind or body to yield myself to an influence the nature of which was unknown. There is a fascination in it, but the fascination is blended with doubt and repulsion. I am disgusted with the tricks and greed of these mediums; their pretended spiritual intercourse has none of the conditions which Tennyson's "In Memoriam" describes, and I do not know that I really need additional proof of the life hereafter. I think my loved ones are still living and awaiting me. And I wait and trust. And yet how glad and grateful I should be to *know!* I must believe that our friends are near us — that they still love and watch over us.

TO HIS NIECE, MRS. PICKARD.

3d mo., 1882.

The death of a man like Longfellow is a national loss. He has been an influence for good; all the Christian virtues his verse and his life exemplified. Pure, kindly, and courteous, simple yet scholarly, he was never otherwise than a gentleman. There is no blot on the crystal purity of his writings. His fame is secure, and is likely to increase in the future. I cannot imagine a time when his songs shall cease to be loved and cherished. "Peace to the good man's memory! Let it grow green with years and blossom through the night of centuries."

TO T. B. ALDRICH.

3d mo., 28, 1882.

It seems as if I could never write again. A feeling of unutterable sorrow and loneliness oppresses me. I must leave to thee or Dr. Holmes the poem for the "Atlantic." I have written a few verses for the next number of the "Wide Awake," in reference to the celebration of Longfellow's last birthday by the children, and do not feel that I can do any more at present, if ever. Our circle is awfully narrowing. We must close our thinned ranks and stand closer to each other. As Wordsworth says: —

> "Like clouds that rake the mountain's summit,
> As waves that know no guiding hand,
> So swift has brother followed brother,
> From sunshine to the sunless land!"

The following lines were written at the Asquam House, in the summer of 1882, on the fly-leaf of a volume of Longfellow's poems, in the possession of Mrs. Martha Nichols: —

> "Hushed now the sweet consoling tongue
> Of him whose lyre the Muses strung;
> His last low swan-song has been sung!
>
> "His last! And ours, dear friend, is near;
> As clouds that rake the mountains here,
> We too shall pass and disappear.
>
> "Yet howsoever changed or tost,
> Not even a wreath of mist is lost,
> No atom can itself exhaust.
>
> "So shall the soul's superior force
> Live on and run its endless course
> In God's unlimited universe.

"And we, whose brief reflections seem
To fade like clouds from lake and stream,
Shall brighten in a holier beam."

TO DOROTHEA L. DIX.

4th mo., 7, 1882.

It gave us all great pleasure to hear directly from thee once more. We had heard of thy illness, but did not know where a letter would find thee. I am glad to know thou art with kind friends, and as comfortable as possible under the circumstances. Thou hast done so much for others that it is right for thee now, in age and illness, to be kindly ministered to. He who has led thee in thy great work of benevolence will never leave thee nor forsake thee. With a feeling of almost painful unworthiness I read thy over-kind words as regards myself. I wish I could feel that I deserved them. But compared with such a life as thine, my own seems poor and inadequate. But none the less do I thank thee for thy generous appreciation.

TO SARAH ORNE JEWETT.

5th mo., 1882.

How kind it was in thee to write me amidst the worries and cares of preparation for thy flitting across the water; and to add to all thy troubles the necessity of entertaining dull company by inviting me to South Berwick. I know it would be wickedly selfish for me to accept such an invitation; but I certainly should do so if I could. Fortunately for thee I have been kept back by illness, and the northeast winds blowing over all the icebergs between here and the Pole. And

then I must be in Amesbury next week, in attendance upon our Quaker Quarterly Meeting, and to meet my niece Lizzie, and my brother if he is able to get there. So I must let thee go with my written benediction and with grateful thanks for thy books, and still more for thyself.

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

5th mo., 18, 1882.

Why should thee wish to step out of the line of march? Why envy those who fall by the way? So long as the east winds do not torment thee and thee can go a-Maying in the coldest rainstorm that ever blew over Andover hill, life must be worth living. And it would not be worth so much to some of us, if thee deserted us. I wish thee would think of that, and hold on. I take it, the east wind is the "Sarsar" wind of death which the Mohammedans say will blow over the earth in the last days. I am groaning (inaudibly) with neuralgic pains, and longing for a change in the weathercock, which is rusted east.

The summer of 1882 was partly spent in Holderness, N. H., at the hotel then recently built on the summit of Shepherd Hill, the spot so beautifully described in his poem "The Hill-Top." This place was visited by Whittier and his sister some years previous when passing from Plymouth to Centre Harbor, and before it was known as a summer resort. His love of the picturesque and sublime in nature was here fully satisfied. The "Storm on Lake Asquam" was written during his sojourn

at this place, and descriptive of a violent thunder-storm viewed from the veranda of the hotel.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

ASQUAM HOUSE, 7th mo., 14, 1882.

Thy dear letter comes to me here, and I have read it where this beautiful but unhistoric lake stretches away before me, green-gemmed with islands, until it loses itself in the purple haze of the Gunstock mountains, whose summits redden in the setting sun. How can I thank thee for the graphic description of your visit to the Isle of Wight, and strange and picturesque Cloverly, and venerable Hermanstow, with its Norman tower looking, as the rare old vicar did, into the ocean's mystery? Since reading it, I seem to have been with you all the way. Did John Oak or his uncle seem aware that they were carrying a third passenger, like the boatman in Uhland's ballad, and did you pay double fare on my account? It was very kind in thee to take so much time from thy needed rest, and give me this great pleasure. I left Amesbury yesterday in a hot southerly rainstorm, but just as we reached Alton Bay, the wind shifted to the north-northeast, and blew a gale, scattering the clouds, and by the time our steamer passed out of the bay into the lake, the water was white-capped, and waves broke heavily on the small islands, flinging their foam and spray against the green foliage on the shores. It was pleasant to see again the rugged mass of Ossipee loom up before us — and the familiar shapes of the long Sandwich range come slowly into view. To-day

the weather is perfect — clear, keen sunshine and cool, bracing wind. The season is rather late, and the sweet-brier roses are still in bloom, and these often-parched hill slopes are now green as your English downs. But I wish I could have been with you at Alum Bay, as you lay down on the green sward, and heard the bells of Carisbrooke Castle. If you visit London or Rochdale again you may possibly like to meet John Bright, and I inclose a note to him, if you have no better introduction.

TO J. R. TOWNSEND, JAMAICA.

8th mo., 23, 1882.

I have received thy kind letter with the beautiful specimen of the tropical growth of the place where thee and thy wife are laboring to make, with the Lord's help, the world about you better. The incident related in thy letter of the release of the imprisoned slave mother is a very striking one, and recalls Peter's experience at Philippi.[1] I doubt not the Girls' Training Home is greatly needed. It seems to me that the poor colored people of the United States and the West Indies constitute in a peculiar manner the true field of Christian labor in our Society. We could not fight to liberate them, but it was expected of us that we would regard them as providentially our wards.

The following is the reply to a letter signed by fifty of Whittier's friends in Great Britain and

[1] The incident referred to was one which occurred in slavery times in Jamaica. A slave mother, with her babe, was imprisoned within stone walls, which an earthquake threw down, leaving mother and child uninjured.

Ireland, expressing the enjoyment, help, and comfort which his writings had given them : —

AMESBURY, 10th mo., 30, 1882.

Your letter has reached me, and I have read it with a feeling of gratitude to our Heavenly Father, for its words of tender sympathy and encouragement. Especially I am glad, that so many dear friends, whose names recall the worthies of past generations, are able to partake with me of the great hope that He whose will it is that all should turn to Him and live, and whose tender mercy endureth forever and is over all the works of his hands, will do the best that is possible for all his creatures. What that may be, we know not, but we can trust Him to the uttermost. This hope and this trust in the mercy of the All Merciful I have felt impelled to express, yet with a solemn recognition of the awful consequences of alienation from Him, and a full realization of the truth that sin and suffering are inseparable. There is a passage in the prayer of John Woolman on his death-bed which has occurred to me, when the burden of the sin and sorrow of the world has rested heavily upon me : " I felt the misery of my fellow-creatures, separated from the Divine Harmony, and it was greater than I could bear, and I was crushed down under it. In the depth of misery I remembered that Thou art omnipotent, and that I had called Thee Father, and I felt that I loved Thee, and I was made quiet in my will, and waited for deliverance from Thee."

Let me say that the hope which I humbly cher-

ish for myself and my fellow-creatures rests, not upon any work or merit of my own, but upon the Infinite Love, manifested in the life and death of the Divine Master, and in the light and grace afforded to all. In the communion and fellowship of that faith in the guidance of the Spirit of Truth, which is the vital principle of our Religious Society, I am affectionately and gratefully your friend.

It is an illustration of the catholicity of Whittier's religious faith that we find him filling a large place in collections of hymns for worship, extracts from many of his poems appearing in recent hymnals, and becoming favorites among the different Christian denominations. In a collection of sixty-six hymns prepared for the use of the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, in 1893, nine were taken from the poems of Whittier, a larger number than from any other author. The extent to which a religious spirit permeates what would generally be regarded as his secular poems is strikingly shown in the selection made by Samuel Longfellow from his ode to "Democracy," which, under the title of "Christianity," is sung to-day in hundreds of churches. "The Eternal Goodness" has furnished material for two favorite hymns, and "Our Master" has lent itself to no less than three, which appear in different selections. "The Wish of To-Day," "My Psalm," "The Voices," "The Meeting," "The Angel of Patience," "The Shadow and the Light," and others have added to the treasures of modern hymnology, and the yearnings of many a devout soul have found utterance in the words of "Andrew Rykman's Prayer."

When, in December, 1882, an effort was being made to defeat the reëlection of Hon. George F. Hoar to the United States Senate, Mr. Whittier wrote a letter to the Boston "Advertiser," at a time when it proved most serviceable, containing these sentences: —

"I need not tell thee that I should regard it as a serious misfortune for Massachusetts to lose the services of Senator Hoar. I do not know him personally, and I am no man's partisan, but I have watched his course with great satisfaction. I regard him as one of the ablest members of the Senate, where his integrity and loyalty to the best traditions of his State have been abundantly manifested. He is a ready and able speaker, sound in judgment, and when once satisfied of the correctness of his position, he has the courage and firmness of his Puritan blood in maintaining it. It seems to me that it would be little short of political suicide for the legislature to set aside such a man. . . . It is neither safe nor just to discard without excuse or reason a faithful and efficient public servant."

Referring to this letter, Senator Hoar, after the death of Mr. Whittier, wrote to a friend: "It would be a sufficient reward for a lifetime of strenuous service and sacrifice. I received from him once or twice, when the air was full of detraction and calumny, loving messages which were infinitely precious."

It could not be otherwise than that Mr. Whittier should take a lively interest in the philanthropic work of Dorothea L. Dix, and it was his

custom to give expression by letter to his admiration for noble and heroic action on whatever field of peace it might be displayed. His calls upon and letters to Miss Dix when she was enfeebled by disease were full of comfort and strength to her, as may be seen by one of her replies, dated Trenton, N. J., June 29, 1883: —

"The envelope which incloses this letter has long been addressed, but delayed through the variations of a long and distressing illness, as inexorable as it is declared incurable, — ossification of the lining membranes of the arteries. . . . How well I remember with comfort and cheer your calls when I was at Danville. You did not suspect the good you were doing me; your presence bringing to recollection so much you had written inciting to a deeper hope and trust in a Divine Providence, a more profound reverence for the great Creator, and a deeper conviction of the truths of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus, the Christ. I do not think, Mr. Whittier, you have ever realized the wide-reaching blessing and good of your published works. My opportunities for knowing very much of this have been large, by personal expression, and more through letters. In saying this to you, I am both earnest and honest. But, dear sir, we must all know in a degree, at least, the influence of our lives. . . . Possessing many comforts, I yet suffer from the influence of unaccustomed inaction, which debility enforces. I have never suffered from the depression that many realize from what is called 'low spirits,' but a sense of aloneness is experienced. Letters from friends

are a source of exceeding satisfaction and comfort. I have no remembrance of any estrangement from an early friend, no break in confidence and trust. Few must attain an advanced age without some 'death in life,' and I have realized very many bereavements, especially of late. . . . I use the pen of a friend for dictation, but add my name by my own hand, now much enfeebled."

Mr. Whittier replied: "Thy letter was very welcome, as I had not heard from thee for several months. I am pained to hear of thy illness. Though still able to go about to some extent, I know, and have known for a long time, the pains and limitations of age and its infirmities, and can enter into sympathy with thee under thy great trial. I wish I could look back on a life work as noble as thine. I never cease to regret that thee did not keep a journal of thy life and labors. The world needs it. I came back [from Asquam Lake to Amesbury] by the way of my native town of Haverhill. I went to the old academy where I was fifty-six years ago. Trees that then stood green and young before it are now, like myself, old and decaying. The faces I knew then are nearly all gone. Only the everlasting beauty of outward Nature remains unchanged, and the merciful Father is over all! The Lord bless thee, dear friend, and comfort thee as a mother comforteth her children!"

The summer of 1883 found him again among the New Hampshire hills, spending some time at Centre Harbor, and in his old haunts by the Asquam lakes, from which retreat he wrote to Mrs. Pitman, who was at the seashore: —

"I wish heartily that I were with you, or you with me, on this breezy hilltop, overlooking the loveliest lakes of New England. Will you not be able to stop at Amesbury on your return? Joseph and Gertrude Cartland are here, and many nice people, among whom is a young lady from New York, who was with Francesca Alexander in Florence, and is mentioned in 'The Story of Ida.' We are reading Sarah Orne Jewett's charming 'Country Doctor' under the pines."

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

ASQUAM HOUSE, 7th mo., 1883.

I wish thee and Sarah could have stayed a day longer. The place was, I think, never so beautiful as it seemed in the afternoon and evening after you left. Such a sunset the Lord never before painted. You have gone away with no idea of the beauty of these lakes and hills. I meant you should have all that sky and summer cloud and land and water could give, but Nature did not carry out my good intentions. But *you* were here, and, so far as I was concerned, the outside world's behavior was of small consequence. . . . Our house is now very full — packed, I should call it. Yesterday I was alarmed by the arrival of two more — man and wife — so huge in proportions, that I wonder Barnum has not secured them for his caravan. The one small room left would not hold them, and our landlord gave them their dinner and sent them off. If anybody else comes we shall be in the condition of Wordsworth's "Party in a Parlor:" —

> "Crammed just as they on earth were crammed —
> All silent and all damned!"

I think this rather startling comparison is in his "Peter Bell." [1]

"The Bay of Seven Islands, and Other Poems," was published in 1883. One of the poems in this volume was "The Rock Tomb of Bradore." A gentleman in Springfield, Mass., wrote to Mr. Whittier, asking: "Is 'The Rock Tomb of Bradore' founded on a real incident — a real epitaph? The poem is one that sinks deep into the heart. The epitaph writes itself in my memory beside one that long since I saw, with my wife, on the wall of Durham cathedral — the names of husband and wife, a date (two hundred years old), and this: —

> "'We once were two;
> We two made one;
> We no more two,
> Though life be gone.'

These lines of yours are much in my mind — for I have just heard of the death of a dear friend, whose loss is terrible to us all who knew her — yet who now rejoins the husband from whom she has been outwardly separated for ten years. I can hardly as yet say any word about it — except these words of yours. The poem reads as if there were

[1] It was in the first edition only of *Peter Bell*. Wordsworth struck out the passage in subsequent editions. The whole quotation is as follows: —

> "Is it a party in a parlor?
> Cramm'd just as they on earth were cramm'd —
> Some sipping punch, some sipping tea,
> But, as you by their faces see,
> All silent and all damn'd!"

a fact behind it; am I too inquisitive in seeking to know the form of the fact?"

Mr. Whittier replied: "There is a *fact* behind the verses of which thee speak. In a work by an English officer, H. Y. Hind, 'Explorations in Labrador,' two volumes, published a quarter of a century ago, the incident is related of his finding the grave of the girl, and I have given the epitaph as the author gave it."

In sending to T. B. Aldrich the copy of the poem "At Last" for the "Atlantic," Whittier wrote: "As the expression of my deepest religious feeling it may not be without interest, and it may help some inquiring spirit. Apart from this, I think I have succeeded in giving it a form not unworthy of the theme."

TO EDNA DEAN PROCTOR.

1st mo., 26, 1884.

I am deeply interested in the struggle going on in Upper Egypt. I am glad General Gordon is going there. At one time his bravery and sagacity nearly abolished the slave trade, and pacified the wild tribes of the Soudan. His journal while Gordon Pacha of Soudan is one of the most interesting I ever read. What a place for an artist the Soudan would be — if an artist were sure of keeping his head on his shoulders! Those fierce wild hordes, in all variety of costumes and color, with their shields of hippopotamus hide, their long spears, and battle-axes, with El Mahdi at their head in his woven steel armor, the strange desert scenery and relentless sun, would be rare

subjects for his pencil. I suppose thee can form some idea of it from having looked on the Mecca caravan at Cairo.

In 1884, a call was made upon Americans interested in antiquarian research for aid to the Egyptian exploration fund. Dr. Holmes contributed a spade for the unearthing of what he aptly described as "truth, historic truth, the mines of which have never been worked till our own time." Mr. Whittier made a similar contribution, accompanied by the following letter to Rev. W. C. Winslow, the treasurer of the fund: "I am glad to have my attention called to the excavation of Zoar. The enterprise commends itself to every reader of the Bible, and every student of the history and monumental wonders of Egypt. I would like to have a hand in it. I hesitate a little about disturbing the repose of some ancient mummy, who perchance

> "'Hobnobbed with Pharaoh glass to glass,
> Or dropped a half-penny in Homer's hat,
> Or doffed his own to let Queen Dido pass,'

but curiosity gets the best of sentiment, and I follow the example of Dr. Holmes by inclosing an order on Lieutenant-Governor Ames for one of his best shovels."

TO EDNA DEAN PROCTOR.

4th mo., 5, 1884.

I think thy "El Mahdi" the most spirited poem I have read for years. The wild wind of the desert blows through it — the fierce sun of the trop-

ics blazes on it — and it is admirably in keeping. As one reads, the wild hordes, splendid in color, barbaric in their half-nakedness, their lean, dark faces ablaze with fanatic fury, are seen sweeping across the burning wastes of the Soudan. The whole strange and terrible romance of the Moslem uprising is condensed in its vigorous and picturesque lines. How, on the other hand, does General Gordon stand out, brave, generous, and self-sacrificing, against the background of vacillating English, and cruel and cowardly Egyptians!

TO THE NATIONAL CARRIAGE BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION.[1]

I am not a builder in the sense of Milton's phrase of one who could "build the lofty rhyme." My vehicles have been of the humbler sort — merely the farm wagon and buckboard of verse, and not likely to run so long as Dr. Holmes's "One Hoss Shay," the construction of which entitles him to the first place in your association. I shall not dare to warrant any of my work for a long drive.

The following inscription was written for a marble bust of Hon. Samuel E. Sewall, of Boston, modeled by Anne Whitney and placed in the Cary Library, Lexington, Mass., May, 1884: —

SAMUEL E. SEWALL.

Like that ancestral judge who bore his name,
Faithful to Freedom and to Truth, he gave,
When all the air was hot with wrath and blame,
His youth and manhood to the fettered slave.

[1] In acknowledgment of election as honorary member.

And never Woman in her suffering saw
A helper tender, wise, and brave as he;
Lifting her burden of unrighteous law,
He shamed the boast of ancient chivalry.

Noiseless as light that melts the darkness is,
He wrought as duty led and honor bid,
No trumpet heralds victories like his, —
The unselfish worker in his work is hid.

This fragment, found among Mr. Whittier's papers, in his handwriting, evidently belongs to some poem he never finished: —

"The dreadful burden of our sins we feel,
The pain of wounds which Thou alone canst heal,
To whom our weakness is our strong appeal.

"From the black depths, the ashes, and the dross
Of our waste lives, we reach out to Thy cross,
And by its fullness measure all our loss!

"That holy sign reveals Thee: throned above
No Moloch sits, no false, vindictive Jove —
Thou art our Father, and Thy name is Love!"[1]

In June, 1884, Mr. Whittier wrote to Mrs. Cartland, "I am anxious to know how you are, and whether you will be able to get away about the first of next month. I feel the need of a change, and I fancy thee and Joseph do. It is very warm here now, but it is doubtless cool enough at the Asquam House."

He wrote to Mrs. Fields, from the Asquam House, July 16, 1884: "I came here some ten days ago. I was far from well when I left home,

[1] This is an alternative reading which has been canceled: —

"No lawless Terror dwells in light above,
Cruel as Moloch, deaf and false as Jove —
Thou art our Father, and Thy name is Love!"

the journey was a hard one for me, and I have not had a head equal to anything more than lying under the trees, and listening to cousin Gertrude's reading occasionally. In some respects I am better than when I left home, but I have not borrowed 'the strength of the hills' as yet. Would it be possible for thee and Sarah to come here?"

After spending July with his friends at Holderness, he joined a party to pass a few days at Ossipee Park, whence he wrote to his cousin Gertrude, 8th mo., 9, 1884: "We reached this place about half past twelve o'clock, having been two and a half hours on the road. The boy who drove us did not know the way, got out of it twice, and carried us nearly to Sandwich. I was very tired when we arrived at the Park, and slept none that night. I am glad thee did not attempt the ride. The place is very fine in many respects, but I prefer Asquam. The view of the lake is very beautiful, but it is the only outlook. The house is pleasant, and richly and tastefully furnished. Yesterday the people from Ossipee Camp who visited us at Weirs came here, and I had a pleasant handshaking with them."

On leaving the Asquam House Whittier and his friends spent some time at Sturtevant's Farm, about a mile above Centre Harbor, where they found more quiet than the hotel afforded; under the shade of the large pine-tree overlooking the lakes many delightful hours were enjoyed, which are commemorated in his poem "The Wood Giant," written on the spot. Here he was joined

by his valued friend Rev. Julius W. Atwood, who henceforward usually spent the whole or a part of his summer vacation with the Whittier party. The following extracts from a letter of Mr. Atwood's give pleasant glimpses of Mr. Whittier's daily life during his summerings, and show the sprightly and thoughtful tone of his delightful talks. Mr. Atwood says: "Although Mr. Whittier had no fondness for society in a technical sense, no one more keenly enjoyed his friends; and his rich fund of anecdote, his remarkable memory of events, of literature, and of persons, and his sparkling humor and delicate tact made him a most charming companion. After breakfast it was our practice to assemble in the parlor for reading the Bible and other devotional books, which often led to interesting discussion; then we would scatter to our respective occupations, Mr. Whittier generally going to his room to answer some of his innumerable letters. Later on we would meet again in social groups, or wend our way through the lovely woodland path to the majestic pine, beneath whose shadow, and with the wide prospect of lake and mountain stretching before us, we spent many happy hours with books and papers and talk, or, as Mr. Whittier expressed it, 'in listless quietude of mind,' often lingering to witness the glorious sunset reflections upon lake and cloud, and the afterglow upon the mountains. In one of our talks I asked him how it seemed to be famous. To which he replied: 'I object to the word as applied to myself — which has always been distasteful to me. I prefer to call it notoriety. The

great satisfaction that has come to me through my writings has been that it has brought me the friendship of some people, whom otherwise I should not have known, whom I love, and who love me. There are a great many good and interesting people in the world, and I have been favored to meet many of them.' Speaking one day of modern writers, he said, 'I regard Emerson as foremost in the rank of American poets; he has written better things than any of us.' It was always a delight to hear his comments upon the public men he had known, from John Quincy Adams down to our own time. While retaining a lively interest in all literary and political matters and keeping abreast of current events, he dwelt most intently in his later years upon the great spiritual and eternal realities of God. By the open fire in the evening he would talk for hours upon sacred themes, ever grateful for the rich blessings of his life and looking with reverent curiosity towards the future, often saying he should not only be willing but glad to go in God's own time, but that he was also glad to live. There was not a shadow of doubt in his mind concerning the immortality of the soul, and one day when speaking of his own hope and expectation for the life to come, he sadly said, 'I wish Emerson could have believed this.' It saddened him to feel that one whom he so deeply loved and revered had not been sustained by this most passionate longing of our human nature. 'He never seemed to care to discuss the subject,' said Mr. Whittier; 'but near the close of his life, when our conversation had turned upon it, and I saw him

for the last time, he said, "Come to Concord and see me, and we will let our buckets deep down into the well and see what we can draw up."'

"From year to year we noticed his increasing feebleness: his walks were a little shorter and less frequent, his seasons of rest longer, and as his summer resorts became known he felt the necessity of a change to avoid a tiresome influx of visitors. For this reason he abandoned his haunts by the Asquam lakes, and one year would find him at Conway, another at Green Acre, another at Wakefield; but wherever it was our privilege to accompany him, the remembrance of those days must remain as a benediction."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK "CRITIC."[1]

8th mo., 1884.

Poet, essayist, novelist, humorist, scientist, ripe scholar, and wise philosopher, if Dr. Holmes does not at the present time hold in popular estimation the first place in American literature, his rare versatility is the cause. In view of the inimitable prose-writer, we forget the poet; in our admiration of his melodious verse, we lose sight of "Elsie Venner" and "The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table." We laugh over his wit and humor, until, to use his own words, —

> "We suspect the azure blossom that unfolds upon a shoot,
> As if Wisdom's old potato could not flourish at its root;"

and perhaps the next page melts us into tears by a pathos only equaled by that of Sterne's sick Lieutenant. He is Montaigne and Bacon under one

[1] On the occasion of the birthday of Dr. Holmes.

hat. His varied qualities would suffice for the mental furnishing of half a dozen literary specialists. To those who have enjoyed the privilege of his intimate acquaintance, the man himself is more than the author. His genial nature, entire freedom from jealousy or envy, quick tenderness, large charity, hatred of sham, pretense, and unreality, and his reverent sense of the eternal and permanent, have secured for him something more and dearer than literary renown — the love of all who know him. I might say much more; I could not say less. May his life be long in the land!

Whittier once said in conversation: "Suppose such a poem as any of Dr. Holmes's recent ones should be found with the name of any of the old masters of song attached to it, would it not add to the reputation of the ancient worthy? What if one of the least of Holmes's poems should be attributed to Ben Jonson; would it not increase Jonson's fame? I do not like the fanciful conceits of the old school. Moore is now forgotten but for his songs; Byron is going out of fashion; Burns lives, — perhaps partly because of the clannishness of the Scotch."

These lines were written in the album of a grandson of his life-long friend, Theodore D. Weld, in April, 1884: —

> What shall I wish him? Strength and health
> May be abused, and so may wealth.
> Even fame itself may come to be
> But wearying notoriety.
> What better can I ask than this? —
> A life of brave unselfishness,

Wisdom for council, eloquence
For Freedom's need, for Truth's defense,
The championship of all that 's good,
The manliest faith in womanhood,
The steadfast friendship changing not
With change of time or place or lot,
Hatred of sin, but not the less
A heart of pitying tenderness
And charity, that, suffering long,
Shames the wrong-doer from his wrong:
One wish expresses all — that he
May even as his grandsire be !

Paul Hamilton Hayne, the South Carolina poet (a nephew of the Hayne whom Webster answered), had a helpful correspondence with Whittier for several years, and came to Amesbury to see him. These lines, part of a tribute inspired by his visit, furnish one of the best pictures of Whittier in his home life : —

"So 'neath the Quaker poet's tranquil roof,
From all deep discords of the world aloof,
I sit once more and measured converse hold
With him whose nobler thoughts are rhythmic gold ;
See his deep brows half-puckered in a knot,
O'er some hard problem of our mortal lot,
Or a dream soft as May winds of the south
Waft a girl's sweetness 'round his firm, set mouth.
Or, should he deem wrong threats the public weal,
Lo, the whole man seems girt with flashing steel,
His glance a sword-thrust and his words of ire
Like thunder tones from some old prophet's lyre.
Or by the hearthstone, when the day is done,
Mark swiftly lanced a sudden shaft of fun ;
The short quick laugh, the smartly smitten knees,
Are all sure tokens of a mind at ease.
God's innocent pensioners in the woodland dim,
The fields, the pastures, know and trust in him,
And in their love, his lonely heart is blest,
Our pure hale-minded Cowper of the West."

CHAPTER XIV.

LAST YEARS.

1884–1892.

THE burden of his correspondence became a serious matter to Mr. Whittier in his later years, for it increased as old age robbed him of the strength to bear it. He had no taste for dictating letters; it was easier for him to write them with his own hand, and he seldom called for help in answering the letters he received. A letter from any old friend was laid aside for the earliest possible answer from his own hand. Until it became a physical impossibility to attend to them, all requests for autographs were answered. In many cases he copied stanzas and whole poems to accommodate a stranger; and many an album contains original verses of his, that have never been made public. He was accustomed to write in the morning, rising early, and finishing most of his correspondence before breakfast. He seldom used the gold pens and handsome inkstands that were sent him, but put them aside as ornaments, contenting himself with steel pens, which he dipped in the little bottles of ink he bought of his stationer. He had no patience with the new-fangled fountain pens and stylographs. The typewriter was not perfected in season for him. He wrote rapidly

a clear, legible hand. He had no system of shorthand, but his first drafts of poems and letters are exceedingly difficult to decipher, the words being run together without crossing of the *t* or dotting of the *i*, and with a bewildering network of interlineation and erasure.

The hardest part of his work was correspondence with poor souls who, having tried every other resource in a vain effort to make a living, at last turned their attention to literature. They came for advice to one who had been successful. His never-failing kindness of heart and his quick sympathies did not allow him to dismiss such cases without helpful consideration, and he had the merciful skill to bind up every wound it was necessary to inflict. Whenever there was urgent need of pecuniary assistance, even from strangers at a distance, as soon as he was satisfied of the need help was given, and his benefactions of this nature were numerous.

There are many amusing incidents in connection with calls made upon him for autographs, and for criticism of manuscripts sent him by those who had no claim upon his attention. His fear of slighting any one who had a genuine interest in him or his work led him to err on what he considered the safe side in this matter. His first impulse was always a kind one, — to grant whatever favor was asked of him. A great number of young writers submitted their first verses for his criticism — or rather approval. If he saw any sign of talent he had some pleasant word for his correspondent, even if he could not give much encourage-

ment. His advice was invariable, not to depend upon verse-making for a livelihood. He frequently received abusive letters because the demands made upon him were not answered in the way desired. A man in Arkansas sent back the autograph for which he had called, because a poem had not accompanied it. He named several poets who had thus accommodated him, and his collection was too valuable to be cheapened by having a simple name in it! He wished nothing at all if he could not have what he called for.

Mr. Whittier was once called up at midnight by a large party of students from the Phillips Exeter Academy, who explained that they were belated by accident. They had started, each with an autograph book, with the expectation of meeting him at a more seasonable hour. He arose and dressed himself and received a party of young men who filled his house, and set about writing in all their books. As they were leaving, very profuse in their thanks, one of them looked at his book, and exclaimed: "You have written only *John* in my book!" "I am afraid some of you have not got as much as that," he replied, as he took up his candle and bade them good-night.

The calls upon him for letters that might be used to help the sale of books and pictures were numerous, and whenever he could conscientiously do so, he was ready to offer such assistance. When Prang published the fine picture illustrating Whittier's "Barefoot Boy," he wrote words of high praise for the artist's work. Rival publishers issued inferior copies of the painting, and had the

impudence to quote Whittier's words as applying to their work, whereupon he wrote this letter to Mr. Prang: "I have heard of writers who could pass judgment upon works of art without seeing them; but the part assigned me by this use of my letter to thee, making me the critic of a thing not in existence, adds to their ingenuity the gift of prophecy. It seems to be hazardous to praise anything. There is no knowing to what strange uses one's words may be put. When a good deal younger than I am now, I addressed some laudatory lines to Henry Clay; but the newspapers soon transferred them to Thomas H. Benton, and it was even said that the saints of Nauvoo made them do duty in the apotheosis of the prophet Joseph Smith. My opinions as an art-critic are not worth much to the public; and, as they seem to be as uncertain and erratic in their directions as an Australian boomerang, I shall, I think, be chary in future of giving them. I don't think I should dare speak favorably of the *Venus de Medici*, as I might expect to find my words affixed to some bar-room lithograph of the bearded woman."

He was generous in his contributions to all philanthropic and reformatory work, without regard to race or nationality. This was a service which his religion demanded, — its dominant note was "help for the helpless." Worthy young men and women, struggling for an education, or about to enter upon business, found in him a wise and ever-ready counselor and assistant, and his sympathetic insight sometimes revealed the needs of others, and enabled him to render timely aid to

those who, perhaps, never knew whence their relief came.

In 1884, Charles F. Coffin, of Lynn, a member of the Society of Friends, who enjoyed the intimate friendship of the poet, presented to the Friends' School at Providence, R. I., a portrait of Whittier painted by Edgar Parker. It is life-size, and represents him as seated in an arm-chair in an attitude of peaceful thought. On the occasion of the presentation, an address was delivered by Thomas Chase, President of Haverford College. A letter from James Russell Lowell, then minister to England, was read, which was accompanied by this sonnet: —

"New England's poet, rich in love as years,
Her hills and valleys praise thee, her swift brooks
Dance in thy verse; to her grave sylvan nooks
Thy steps allure us, which the wood-thrush hears
As maids their lovers', and no treason fears.
Through thee her Merrimacs and Agiochooks
And many a name uncouth win gracious looks,
Sweetly familiar to both Englands' ears.
Peaceful by birthright as a virgin lake,
The lily's anchorage, which no eyes behold
Save those of stars, yet for thy brother's sake,
That lay in bonds, thou blew'st a blast as bold
As that wherewith the heart of Roland brake,
Far heard across the New World and the Old."

A letter from John Bright was also read, expressing his regret at not being able to be present. He said in closing: —

"In the poem of 'Snow-Bound' there are lines on the death of the poet's sister which have nothing superior to them in beauty and pathos in our language. I have read them often with always

increasing admiration. I have suffered from the loss of those near and dear to me, and I can apply the lines to my own case and feel as if they were written for me. 'The Eternal Goodness' is another poem which is worth a crowd of sermons which are spoken from the pulpits of our sects and churches, which I do not wish to undervalue. It is a great gift to mankind when a poet is raised up among us who devotes his great powers to the sublime purpose of spreading among men principles of mercy and justice and freedom. This our friend Whittier has done in a degree unsurpassed by any other poet who has spoken to the world in our noble tongue. I feel it a great honor that my bust should stand in your hall near the portrait of your great poet."

The career of General Gordon, who lost his life at Khartoum, had a great fascination for Mr. Whittier, and he often expressed his admiration of his character, as a Christian and philanthropist, of course, and not as a soldier. In March, 1885, Mr. Whittier received a letter from his friend, John Bright, who had left Gladstone's cabinet on account of the Egyptian policy of the government, severely criticising him, as a member of the Society of Friends, for some expression of his in favor of Gordon, which had been made public in England. Mr. Whittier had been called upon by Mr. Charles C. Reed, of London, to write an ode to the memory of Gordon. To this request Mr. Whittier had replied, under date of March 4, 1885: —

"Thy letter found me pondering the very subject

to which it so kindly sought to call my attention. For years I have followed General Gordon's course with constantly increasing interest, wonder, and admiration, and I have felt his death as a great personal bereavement. A Providential man, his mission in an unbelieving and selfish age revealed the mighty power of faith in God, self-abnegation, and the enthusiasm of humanity. For centuries no grander figure has crossed the disk of our planet. Unique, unapproachable in his marvelous individuality, he belongs to no sect or party, and defies classification or comparison. I should be sorry to see his name used for party purposes, for neither Conservative nor Radical has any special claim upon him. . . . We Americans, in common with all English-speaking people, the world over, lament his death, and share his glorious memory.

"I wish it were in my power to do what thee so kindly suggest, but I scarcely feel able to do justice, at this time, to the wonderful personality which for the past year has stood on the banks of the Nile, relieved against the dark background of the Soudan. I have been suffering from illness, and dare not undertake the eulogy of such a man with a feeble hand. Perhaps it may some time be in my power, as it is now in my inclination, to put my thoughts of him into material form. If I could reach the ear of Alfred Tennyson,[1] I should urge

[1] Mr. Reed writes: "I communicated this to Lord Tennyson, and in addition to cordially thanking me for the extract from Mr. Whittier's letter, as above, Lord Tennyson wrote Mr. Whittier as follows: "—

him to give the world a threnody inspired by the life and death of one who has made not only England but the world richer for his memory."

An extract from this characteristic letter was sent by Mr. Reed to an English paper, Mr. Whittier offering no objection, although it was not originally written for publication. The long letter of protest from John Bright, referred to above, was called out by the publication of this extract. Bright's letter, covering eight pages of note-paper, is not here published, permission not having been received. But Whittier's reply may properly have place in these pages. It was dated 3d mo., 31, 1885 : —

My dear Friend, — I regret the publication of my hasty private note to C. C. Reed, as it has occasioned thee uneasiness. I quite agree with thee as regards the armed interference with Egypt and the Soudan, and I think one of the best acts of thy life was thy withdrawal from the ministry in consequence of it. But as respects Charles Gordon, I cannot withdraw my admiration from the man, while I disapprove of his warlike methods.

Dear Mr. Whittier, — Your request has been forwarded to me, and I herein send you an epitaph for Gordon in our Westminster Abbey — that is, for his cenotaph : —

"Warrior of God, man's friend, not here below,
But somewhere dead far in the waste Soudan ;
Thou livest in all hearts, for all men know
This earth hath borne no simpler, nobler man."

With best wishes, yours very faithfully, Tennyson.

Mr. Reed adds: "Mr. Whittier told me afterwards that he wanted not four lines only, but something like Tennyson's *Ode on the Duke of Wellington*."

I learned much of him from my friend, Dr. Williams, who knew him well in China, and who thought him one of the most generous and self-sacrificing men he ever knew. Still later, I have read of his labors in the Soudan to suppress the dreadful slave trade, and it seems to me that he went to Khartoum once more really on an errand of peace, and I am not sure that he would not have succeeded if the English army had not invaded the Soudan. It is not probable that I shall write a poem on his life and death, but I thought of it, and intended to express my admiration of his faith, courage, and self-abnegation, while lamenting his war training and his reliance on warlike means to accomplish a righteous end. As it is, he was a better man than David or Joshua — he was humane and never put his prisoners into brick-kilns nor under hammers. And he believed in a *living* God, who reveals himself now as in the old time. There seems to be no excuse now for keeping General Wolseley in the Soudan. I see no reason for fighting the Arabs, who surely are not to blame for disliking the rule of Egypt. I hope the danger of a war between England and Russia has passed away. The matter at issue is one to be settled by arbitration, not by the sword. I wish we could say that my country is Christian. Our new Secretary of State has spoken out manfully and strongly against the dynamite mischief. The past winter has been a hard one for me, and I am far from well. Hoping that thy own health is good, I am with love and sincere regard thy friend.

TO JOSEPH CARTLAND.

3d mo., 24, 1885.

I see there is a great deal of criticism of "A Reasonable Faith."[1] Those who deny the divine revelation of the Holy Spirit, and who regard the letter of the Bible as the sole authority in Christian faith, I suppose would be alarmed by it. And those who have looked without a word of dissent upon the work of destruction which has been going on in our Society for the last decade will, of course, continue it, as well as those in England who have been giving aid and comfort to the disorganizers here. However sound and evangelical a man may be, if he does not use their language and pronounce their "Shibboleth" he must be put down. All this, however, can really harm no one personally, though it is a sad evidence of the demoralization of our Society.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

6th mo., 16, 1885.

From all that I have heard of mediumship it seems to affect unfavorably the moral sense — the distinction between true and false is less clear. Mediums are first deceived themselves, and they are tempted to deceive others. Their actions have the irresponsibility of dreams; they live and move in an unnatural atmosphere, where it is neither full daylight, nor yet utter darkness; an uncertain twilight in which things may *seem*, which are not. The more I think of it, the more I am convinced

[1] *A Reasonable Faith: Short Essays for the Times.* By three English Friends.

that, for the present, the whole matter may be best left to the cool heads of the Psychical Research. The future life is sure — our dear ones live ; but we may separate ourselves further from them, by consulting uncertain oracles, deceiving and being deceived. Let us believe, and trust, and *wait*. "Patience," Milton says, "is the exercise of saints," and it may not be unprofitable for us sinners.

TO HON. JOHN SCHULTZ, OF MANITOBA.[1]

4th mo., 25, 1885.

The Indian question is pressing for solution upon the United States as well as the Dominion of Canada. It is one of great difficulty, and requires not only political wisdom but Christian philanthropy for its adjustment, both of which seem to me indicated in thy speech in the Canadian Senate. I heartily thank thee for it.

Mr. Whittier's voice in reading poetry, whether his own or others', was fuller and stronger than in ordinary conversation or in reading prose. There was a depth and sonorousness in it that would surprise any one who, accustomed only to his conversation, heard him read verse for the first time. If he could have read in public with the same voice he used in a small company of friends, an audience of thousands would have been delighted with his rendering of a poem. Of the poet's manner of reading his own verses, a writer in the "Portland Transcript" says : —

[1] On reading his speech in the Canadian Parliament, in behalf of the Indians.

"One evening at the Sturtevants', we were talking of the immense pine we had seen in the pasture, and Mr. Whittier said he had just written 'a little ditty' about it. His cousin Gertrude asked if he would not let us hear it, and without hesitation he read his noble poem 'The Wood Giant.' His voice in reading was of a quality entirely different from that in conversation — much fuller and deeper. The lines were scanned with a majestic movement, and the slight hoarseness which has for several years affected his voice added to the effect of the reading; an audience of a thousand people could have heard every syllable. This stanza was read with especial impressiveness: —

> "'Was it the half-unconscious moan
> Of one apart and mateless,
> The weariness of unshared power,
> The loneliness of greatness?'

"Taking from the table a volume of Trowbridge's poems he turned to 'At Sea,' remarking that it was the best work of this writer, 'and nothing better of its kind was ever written by anybody.' He then read the poem aloud, with the same full, deep voice with which he had rendered his own lines."

After his return from his summer in New Hampshire in 1885, he wrote from Amesbury to a friend: "I have returned to this place after some weeks' sojourn among the hills, and I think on the whole I am better for the change, but it would take the Himalayas and the Andes to make me feel young again. We had pleasant weather and pleasant

friends, and we are thankful for the days spent under the pines at Asquam."

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

10th mo., 2, 1885.

I have been thinking of thy gracious and generous proposal of hospitality. It has made me very happy, though I have not been able to see how I can avail myself of it. I find that I am unable to bear the excitement of city life for any length of time, however carefully I may be shielded by my friends. I am unhappily notorious, and cannot hide myself. My deafness makes me confused and uncomfortable when strangers are present. The great and really painful effort I am compelled to make when in company, to listen and try to understand, and make fitting replies, and the uncertainty I feel, when I venture to speak, whether I have heard aright — all this affects my nerves, and costs me nights of sleeplessness and days of weariness. In fact I am what the Turks call "a cut-off one," so far as society is concerned. . . . As soon as it is known that I am in your premises a steady stream of interviewers, autograph-hunters, and people with missions will flow in upon you. It would be like having a waif from Barnum's Museum shut up in your library, and people coming in to see what it looks like. It would make your life miserable. Sarah's dog could not keep them off. You would have to get out a writ of ejectment and set me and my carpet-bag into the street — and yet how I wish I could say "yes"! I thank the good Providence that has given me such a friend,

dear as Vittoria Colonna to Michael Angelo. I wish I could look forward to the enjoyment of such friendship for many years in this life, but when one is approaching fourscore that is not to be expected. Though for that matter, I see that Senator Hoar, in his great speech of day before yesterday at Springfield, took occasion to deny the self-evident fact that I am an old man! . . . I had a rare good visit from Dr. Holmes and his wife the other day. We two old boys wandered about in the woods, talking of many things — half merry, half sad. We were stranded mariners, the survivors of a lost crew, warming ourselves at a fire kindled from the wreck of our vessel. . . . The woods here are blazing with color, but I fail to see the red against the green. Both look the same. But the walnuts and maples are glorious, making sunshine when there is none in the heavens.

PHILLIPS BROOKS TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

11th mo., 11, 1885.

I have long known John Woolman and delighted in his Journals. And I have been well aware how the first honor of the anti-slavery work belongs to the Society of Friends. If only other religious bodies had been as ready for their duty, how different it might have been! Archdeacon Farrar left me on Monday. He will never forget — as I surely shall not — the kind and cordial welcome which you gave us, and the time which it was our privilege to pass with you. I have had much to thank you for before, very much indeed. Now it is a pleasure to assure you most earnestly of my respect and deepened gratitude.

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.[1]

2d mo., 9, 1886.

There was nothing of the gloom and horror of a Puritanic funeral. All was quiet and peaceful, and more than hopeful. The full assurance of the all-enfolding love of the Heavenly Father seemed with the friends and relatives. It was a cheerful acceptance, rather than resignation to the inevitable. Was it a delusion, a forced make-believe, or the faith which robs the grave of its victory?

This poem, entitled "A Day's Journey," was written in 1886, for the tenth anniversary of the wedding of his niece: —

After your pleasant morning travel
You pause as at a wayside inn,
And take with grateful hearts your breakfast
Though served in dishes all of TIN.

Then go, while years as hours are counted,
Until the dial's hand at noon
Invites you to a dinner table
Garnished with SILVER fork and spoon.

And when the vesper bell to supper
Is calling, and the day is old,
May love transmute the tin of morning
And noonday's silver into GOLD.

His summer visit in 1886 was to Centre Harbor and the Sturtevant Farm, whither the Cartlands and Lucy Larcom accompanied him. His letters to his friends from these places give evidence of hearty enjoyment of walks and readings under the oaks and pines. In autumn, after his return

[1] After attending the funeral of a lovely young girl, where the services were conducted in the Swedenborgian form.

to Amesbury, he wrote that he wished he could go back to the mountains and "see the woods tangled with rainbows."

TO LUCY LARCOM.

8th mo., 29, 1886.

I was glad to hear from thee, and that thee find the quiet of Ossipee Park, the crowd and fashion of the Crawford House, alike interesting. It is possible to be too quiet, and a change from solitary Nature to human contact and voices is sometimes desirable. There are always nice people to be found in any crowd. For my own part, I like folks generally. Very few come amiss to me.

TO JOHN BRIGHT.

9th mo., 3, 1886.

I appreciate the serious question which agitates Great Britain at this time, and I do not feel that I fully understand it. I doubt the propriety of our meddling with it on this side of the water. It has indeed occurred to me that a federative system in which Ireland, Scotland, Canada, Austria, and India could all be represented in the common Parliament of England, might be a solution of the question, but there may be difficulties which I do not comprehend in the way of such an arrangement. . . . I hope the years rest more lightly on thee than on myself. I am older (in my 79th year) and find my strength failing, though I am grateful to a good Providence for many blessings which alleviate the pains and infirmities of age. I am, very truly, thy loving and grateful friend.

TO GRACE GREENWOOD.

10th mo., 1886.

I spent last summer among the New Hampshire hills, as I have done for several years. Nature never disappoints me. I think every year of my life makes me more sensitive to the beauty all about us. At times, a great feeling of loneliness comes over me; I miss sadly the old dear faces, and think of the days that are no more. My life has not proved what I dreamed of in youth, but I suppose that is true of all. My world is really composed of a few dear friends. I wish I could see thee and talk over our old recollections, and I shall hope to do so if we both live to another summer. I hope our meeting will be in Amesbury, for somehow I always associate thee with that place.

TO HARRIET MINOT PITMAN.

10th mo., 1886.

I expect to go to Amesbury the first of next week to meet my niece Elizabeth Pickard, and to vote at election. I shall not vote for ——. He and the rest of the so-called Independents have gone over entirely to the Democratic party. I am a Republican still. If my party makes a bad nomination, I shall not vote it, but shall not stultify myself by going over to a party which has done its worst to destroy the Union and sustain slavery.

TO ELISABETH CAVAZZA.

12th mo., 18, 1886.

What words can adequately thank thee for thy rare poem — too beautiful for its subject — which

greeted me on my birthday! I felt while reading it as if I were enjoying myself under false pretenses, and appropriating something that belonged to somebody else. I began to doubt my identity, like the man coming from town-meeting after he had been chosen selectman, and who, overwhelmed with his honors, began to feel that he could not be himself, and was only reassured by calling his dog, and finding himself recognized. Seriously, the poem is a very fine one, and I am just as grateful as if I deserved it.

"Saint Gregory's Guest, and Recent Poems," published in 1886, contained sixteen poems beside the verses which gave the title to the book, most of them written after Mr. Whittier had passed his seventy-fifth year. They include "The Homestead," "The Wood Giant," "Revelation," "Banished from Massachusetts," "The Two Elizabeths," "Sweet Fern," "How the Robin Came," "Birchbrook Mill," and "Hymns of the Brahmo Somaj."

The origin of the poem "The Light that is Felt" is explained in the following letter from Mrs. George A. Palmer, of Elmira, N. Y.: "When my oldest daughter was two and a half years old, she knew Whittier's 'Barefoot Boy' by heart, thus: When I would repeat it to her the omission of a line would be instantly corrected; as one day she said to me, 'Mamma, you skipted out "apples of Cusperides."' Once, in going ahead of me in a dark hall, she turned with sudden fear, and said, 'Mamma, take hold of my hand, so it

will not be so dark.' This incident and the fact of her affection for Mr. Whittier's poetry was reported to him by a friend of the family. My surprise and delight were great when, in April, 1884, I received a kind letter from the poet and a manuscript copy of the poem, which was afterward published in the Christmas number of 'St. Nicholas.' In his letter Mr. Whittier said, 'I am glad I have such a friend in thy little girl. Her good opinion of my verses is worth more to me than that of a learned reviewer. I send a rhymed paraphrase of her own beautiful thought.' "

Soon after "The Homestead" appeared, Mr. Whittier wrote to Mrs. Pitman: "I am glad thee liked 'The Homestead.' I saw in the country several of these melancholy spectacles of abandoned homes. I think the farmers of New England are better off as a class, on their hard soil, than those who are on the rich lands of the West. They are not rich, but they are not poor; they live comfortably, and as a rule own their farms clear of mortgage. If they were content to live and toil as the poorer farmers in the West do, they would double their deposits in the savings banks." About this poem Sarah Orne Jewett wrote: "I do not know when anything has touched me so nearly and dearly. Nobody has mourned more than I over the forsaken farmhouses which I see everywhere as I drive about the country out of which I grew, and where every bush and tree seem like my cousins! I hope this will make people stop and think, and I know it will bring tears to many eyes. That line about

the squirrel in the forsaken house nobody else would have thought of but you. I send all the thanks one little letter can carry."

TO ELISABETH CAVAZZA.

2d mo., 12, 1887.

I hasten to thank thee for thy beautiful gift, which brings the fragrance of the pine woods to me. I shall have a softer pillow than Jacob of old had, and if I do not see "angels ascending and descending," I shall dream of the kind friend who sent it, which is quite as well. As old Father Taylor said, when asked if he did n't want to go where the angels were: "I don't want angels; I like folks better!". . . There is nothing better than work for mind and body. It makes the burden of sorrow, which all must sooner or later carry, lighter. I like the wise Chinese proverb: "You cannot prevent the birds of sadness from flying over your head, but you may prevent them from stopping to build their nests in your hair!"

TO ELIZABETH GAY.

2d mo., 22, 1887.

Some of my friends in Boston are puzzling themselves with the Buddhist Theosophy, and have got a Hindoo adept, one Mohini, a solemn-faced Oriental, to expound its mysteries. And the Society for Psychical Research are gathering up all the stories afloat of signs and omens and apparitions, witchcraft, and spiritualism — a competitive examination of ghosts! I have rather enjoyed reading the reports of a similar society in Eng-

land. The investigations are conducted on strictly scientific principles. I hope some clue may be found to the great mystery of life and death — and the beyond! But I scarcely expect it. We shall still have to trust and wonder, and keep our faith, with Emerson, that "whatever is excellent, as God lives is permanent."

In March, 1887, Rev. John W. Chadwick, D. D., of Brooklyn, wrote the following letter to Mr. Whittier, embodying a suggestion that was to some extent heeded in the edition of his complete works published in 1888: "In connection with certain studies, I have done much reading lately in your poems, already long well known, and I now write to beg of you that ere it is too late you will prepare an edition of them with little paragraphs attached — headings rather than notes — indicating the circumstances which called them forth. I am sure that such an edition would be very welcome, and that it would be immensely useful in the way of instruction concerning many a feature of the anti-slavery struggle. Your poems will be read much more than any history. You would have an ample precedent in the edition of Wordsworth containing such paragraphs, and you must know how highly these paragraphs are esteemed. Many of your personal poems, like that on our old friends, the Coxes of Kennett Square, would get new interest from a few words of explanation. Will you not think very seriously of this? I am sure you could do nothing that would so much increase the debt of gratitude we owe to you already."

This is Mr. Whittier's reply: "I thank thee for the kind suggestions of thy letter, and should be glad to do something in accordance with them, if I did not fear it would seem to be attaching too much importance on my part to my writings, when in sober fact I see and feel their deficiencies so clearly that sometimes I turn from them with utter weariness. And secondly, I feel the weight of years growing very heavy, and any task beyond that of the necessary routine of daily imperative duty, I shrink from. 'The grasshopper is a burden.' I will, however, bear thy suggestion in mind, and if my health and strength permit, I may yet see my way clear to act to some extent upon it."

In 1887, he wrote to an aged friend in New Bedford, Daniel Ricketson, that Boston had lost much of its old attraction for him, since Emerson, Longfellow, Fields, and other friends had passed away, and added, "I try to get into the fields and woods as often as I feel able. Nature never disappoints me — never tires me. I think in love of Nature, and simple quiet living, thee and I are much alike. We both find solace in rhythmic lines, and we both loved Emerson and Thoreau. I am nearer the great mystery than thyself, but we are both almost at its gate. May the dear God be with us!" On another occasion, he wrote to the same friend, in regard to some great strikes then in progress: "My sympathies are naturally with the laboring class, amidst which I was born and grew up to manhood. But I confess that I have never known much benefit to result to that

class from 'strikes.' I do not know enough of this particular movement to feel authorized in expressing a decided opinion."

In 1887, a township in southern California, near Los Angeles, was named for Mr. Whittier, and its Quaker founders sent him a deed of a lot of land on its central square. In his letter acknowledging the compliment he wrote: "The great tide of emigration to southern California will not fail to fill up the vacant lots and outlying farms of the Quaker city. I use that term in no sectarian sense, for I see the good in all denominations, and hope that all will be represented in the settlement. I trust that its Quakerism will be of the old, practical kind, 'diligent in business and serving the Lord,' not wasting its strength and vitality in spasmodic emotions, not relying on creed and dogma, but upon faithful obedience to the voice of God in the heart. I shall watch the progress of the settlement with deep interest, and earnest desires for its growth and welfare. I cannot doubt that care will be taken that the dreadful evil of intemperance shall not be permitted to fasten itself upon the young settlement, and that in sobriety, industry, large charity, active benevolence, and educational privilege it may prove an example worthy of general imitation, and fulfill the fond anticipations of its founders."

TO HARRIET MINOT PITMAN.

OAK KNOLL, 6th mo., 1887.

I wish thee could see this place now, in the full glory of late June. The lawns and woods and

flowers are at their best. Rhodoras, azaleas, sweet-brier, and other wild flowers are making the woods lovely. I hope to go to Amesbury this week. It is not as pretty there, but it is more like home, and I seem nearer to the dear ones who lived there with me. Does thee take much interest in the Andover trial? My sympathies are strongly with the professors, though I don't see how they can stick to the creed which girdles the university with its iron chain. The great question of the Future Life is almost ever with me. I cannot answer it, but I can *trust*.

TO EDWARD WORSDELL.

11th mo., 30, 1887.

I am glad to learn that a second edition of the "Gospel of Divine Help"[1] is called for. It supplies a want which, it seems to me, was never so strongly felt as at the present time, not only in the Society of Friends, but among the thoughtful and earnest seekers after truth in other denominations, who find it impossible to accept much which seems to them irreverent and dishonoring to God in creeds founded on an arbitrary arrangement of isolated and often irrelevant texts — the letter that killeth, without the Spirit, which alone gives life. It is scarcely possible to overestimate the evils of doubt, anguish, despair, and infidelity resulting from doctrines which attribute to the Heavenly Father schemes and designs utterly at variance with the moral sense of his creatures, and

[1] *The Gospel of Divine Help.* By Edward Worsdell, B. A., of Lancaster, England.

which in them would be regarded as unspeakably unjust and cruel. To those who have become confused and bewildered by having these dreadful conceptions of the All-Merciful forced upon them as a vital necessity of Christian belief, this little book may afford a clearer view of the simple truths of divine revelation. I cannot but believe that even those who may dissent from, or not fully adopt, some of its conclusions must feel, as they read, the prayerful reverence and earnest sincerity of its author in his desire to vindicate the ways of God to man, and win souls to the Divine Master, by presenting the "sweet reasonableness" of his gospel of love. The entire freedom of the book from self-assertion, assumption, and dogmatism affords small opportunity for unfriendly criticism. It is the honest work of an honest man, desirous of helping others, who may be in doubt and discouragement, to find the light and peace into which he has been providentially led. It has my respect and sympathy.

TO JOHN BRIGHT.

9th mo., 16, 1887.

I see your Yearly Meeting has appointed delegates to the conference of Yearly Meetings of Friends. I am not expecting much good from the conference. It is utterly impossible to reconcile the radical differences of opinion and action in our Society, on both sides of the water. Some of us are still Friends of the Fox and Penn and Barclay school, and we cannot shout and sing like the Salvation Army. Some of us still believe in the Divine Immanence.

TO NORA PERRY.

12th mo., 16, 1887.

Whipple was one of the first to speak a good word for me in the "North American Review." I used to meet him whenever I came to Boston, and he and Fields, and Haskell, editor of the Boston "Transcript," and I used to get together at the "Old Corner Book-Store," or at a neighboring restaurant, where we got coffee and chatted pleasantly of men and books. There were others doubtless with us — I think probably Underwood and Starr King, and later, J. R. Osgood. I used to think Whipple said his best things on such occasions.

Mr. Whittier's affection for Whipple led him to write an introductory note to a collection of his friend's papers issued at this time.

The eightieth anniversary of Whittier's birth was celebrated with marks of especial honor. Hon. George F. Hoar's address delivered at a banquet of the Essex club, in Boston, November 12, 1887, was a worthy prelude to the great chorus of praise and congratulation in which the voice of every State was heard a few weeks later. It was a call for some suitable testimonial from his native county. Senator Hoar said that Essex County had contributed three of the greatest names in the history of liberty, in three memorable epochs, namely, Nathaniel Ward of Ipswich, author of the "Body of Liberties;" Nathan Dane of Beverly, author of the ordinance that devoted the great Northwest to liberty, and John G. Whittier of Amesbury. Of Mr. Whittier he said: —

"The third, which I should place highest in the list, is the name of our living fellow-citizen, John G. Whittier. I wonder if Mr. Whittier knows how much his countrymen love him. The service he has rendered in our great anti-slavery struggle is one with which I think that of no orator can be compared. The speech of Webster or Sumner is heard but by few. How soon, after all, it is forgotten! But the musical arrow of the poet pierces the heart of the whole people. It stirs the blood. It dwells in the memory. It springs to the lips in the time of deepest emotion. The figure of the orator is forgotten when his own passes away. But Whittier sits, and for centuries will sit, by millions of American firesides, a beloved and perpetual guest. It is said that —

> 'Scotland shall flourish while each peasant learns
> The Psalms of David and the songs of Burns.'

The love of liberty will not die out in the land while the youth of America learn and love the verse of the poet who combines the lofty inspiration of David with the sweet simplicity of Burns."

This address was received with enthusiasm, and action was at once taken by the club to carry its proposition into effect. The testimonial took the form of a portfolio, in which was engrossed the speech of Senator Hoar, and an address signed by the officers and all the members of the Essex Club. Then follow many hundreds of autographs of state officials and distinguished citizens, representing every section and every interest of the Commonwealth. Next come the signatures of

fifty-nine United States Senators, the entire bench of the Supreme Court of the United States headed by Chief Justice Waite, Speaker Carlisle of the House of Representatives, and three hundred and thirty-three Members of the House, coming from every State and Territory in the Union. To these are added the names of many private citizens of distinction, such as George Bancroft, Robert C. Winthrop, James G. Blaine, and Frederick Douglass. This is an extract from Mr. Whittier's letter acknowledging the receipt of this testimonial: —

"I really know not how to acknowledge a testimonial of such proportions and character, the magnitude and value of which I fully appreciate. I can only say that I accept it with profound gratitude. I am deeply moved by the fact that political and sectional differences seem to have been wholly set aside by the signers, and that those from whom I have felt compelled to dissent in times past have cordially joined with my personal and political friends in this tribute of respect to a private citizen, who loves his whole country, and is devoutly thankful that the sun of his closing day shines upon a free and united people."

Mr. Whittier received his friends on his eightieth birthday at Oak Knoll, and fortunately had the strength for all the duties of hospitality to his guests. Governor Ames and his executive council came from Boston by special train to pay their respects to the aged poet, and they were accompanied by many distinguished citizens of Massachusetts and other States. When Mr. Whittier

led his company to the dining-room he called upon the governor to cut the birthday cake, while he himself helped in its distribution. He was so alert and active throughout the day that it was difficult to realize his age and invalidism. The "Boston Advertiser" issued a birthday number containing letters about Whittier and sonnets addressed to him, by Dr. Holmes, J. R. Lowell, Francis Parkman, Dr. F. H. Hedge, George F. Hoar, Dr. C. A. Bartol, Walt Whitman, Samuel Longfellow, Arlo Bates, and many others of the literary guild.

In 1887, Mr. George W. Childs, of Philadelphia, generously offered to defray the expense of a Milton memorial window in St. Margaret's Church, London. The offer was accepted, and in October of that year, Archdeacon Frederick W. Farrar wrote to him as follows: —

"The Milton window is making good progress. It will be, I hope, magnificently beautiful, and both in coloring and design will be worthy of your munificence, and worthy of the mighty poet to whose memory it will be dedicated. The artists are taking good pains with it. I sent you an outline of the sketch not long ago. Before the end of the year I hope to send you a painting of the complete work. Messrs. Clayton and Bell are putting forth their best strength, and promise me that it shall be finished before the end of the Jubilee Year. When it is put in, I shall make your gift more universally known. Mr. Lowell wrote me a quatrain for the Raleigh window. I can think of no one so suitable as Mr. J. G. Whittier to write four lines for the Milton window. Mr.

Whittier would feel the fullest sympathy for the great Puritan poet, whose spirit was so completely that of the Pilgrim Fathers. I have always loved and admired Mr. Whittier's poems. Could you ask him as a kindness to yourself and to me, and as a tribute to Milton's memory, if he would be so good as to write this brief inscription, which I would then have carved in marble or otherwise under the window. The same tablet will also record that it is your gift to the church of the House of Commons, which was dearer to Milton than any other."

Mr. Childs forwarded this letter to Mr. Whittier, who accepted the commission, and composed the following quatrain: —

> "The new world honors him whose lofty plea
> For England's freedom made her own more sure,
> Whose song, immortal as its theme, shall be
> Their common freehold while both worlds endure."

These lines were sent to Mr. Childs, to be forwarded to Archdeacon Farrar, in a letter from Mr. Whittier of which the following is a copy: —

"I am glad to comply with thy request and that of our friend Archdeacon Farrar. I hope the lines may be satisfactory. It is difficult to put all that could be said of Milton into four lines. How very heartfelt and noble thy benefactions are! Every one is a testimony of peace and good will. . . . I think even such a scholar as Dr. Farrar will not object to my use of the word 'freehold.' Milton himself uses it in the same way in his prose writings, viz.: 'I too have my chapter and *freehold* of rejoicing.'"

Mr. Whittier suggested to Dr. Farrar that if thought preferable the word "heirloom" might be substituted for "freehold." This is the Archdeacon's reply, dated January 2, 1888: —

"First let me express the wish that God's best blessings may rest on you and your house during this New Year. My personal gratitude and admiration have long been due to you for the noble influence you have exercised for the furtherance of forgotten but deeply needed truths. I have myself endeavored to do something to persuade men of the lesson you have so finely taught, — that God is a loving Father, not a terrific Moloch. Next let me thank you for the four lines on Milton. They are all that I can desire, and they will add to the interest which all Englishmen and Americans will feel in the beautiful Milton window. I think that if Milton had now been living, you are the poet whom he would have chosen to speak of him, as being the poet with whose whole tone of mind he would have been most in sympathy. . . . Unless you wish 'heirloom' to be substituted for 'freehold,' I will retain the latter as the original."

TO HARRIET MINOT PITMAN.

1st mo., 1888.

The lack of concentration of thought thee complains of is the result of nervous debility. I have for years suffered from it, and it is only by a painful effort that I can hold my thoughts steadily before me. But, after all, I think it may be quite as well. To have *fixed* ideas is insanity, and it is safest to let the mind wander a little at its own

sweet will. Some one has said, "Thinking is an idle waste of thought."

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

2d mo., 9, 1888.

I am delighted to have such a favorable report from thee by Sarah's nice letter. Sitting by the peat fire, listening to Lowell's reading of his own verses! A convalescent princess with her minstrel in attendance! There may be a question as to curative properties of Dr. Lowell's dose, but that its flavor was agreeable I have no doubt. My own experience of the poetry cure was not satisfactory. Some years ago, when I was slowly getting up from illness, an honest friend of mine, an orthodox minister, in the very kindness of his heart thought to help me on by administering a poem in five cantos, illustrating the five points of Calvinism. I could only take a homœopathic dose of it. Its unmistakable flavor of brimstone disagreed with my stomach, probably because I was a Quaker.

TO THE SAME.

4th mo., 30, 1888.

I am thankful that I have lived to see another spring; to watch the slow, beautiful resurrection of Nature. A little north of us, as seen from our hills, the snow still lingers, but here the grass is greening in the lowlands, and the arbutus blooms among the pine needles. I have been at Amesbury for a fortnight. Somehow I seem nearer to my mother and sister; the very walls seem to have become sensitive to unseen presences. . . . I am

looking over the proofs of my verses for the new edition, with a strong desire to drown some of them like so many unlikely kittens. But my publishers say that there is no getting rid of them, that they have more than nine lives. I hope I am correcting a little of the bad grammar and rhythmical blunders which have so long annoyed my friends who have graduated at Harvard instead of a district country school.

TO THE SAME.

5th mo., 19, 1888.

I am sorry to find that the hard winter has destroyed some handsome spruces, which I planted eight years ago, and which had grown to be fine trees. Though rather late for me, I shall plant other trees in their places, for I remember the advice of the old Laird of Dombiedike to his son Jock: "When ye have nothing better to do, ye can be aye stickin' in a tree: it 'll be growin' when ye are sleepin'." There is an ash-tree growing here that my mother planted with her own hands, at threescore and ten. What agnostic folly to think that tree has *outlived* her who planted it! . . . I have read the letters of Jane Carlyle over again, and find that my first judgment of them was too severe. She was "cut out" for a very noble woman. Her wit and humor are simply marvelous. If she had married a man she really loved she would have been a happier and better woman. There is no excuse for Carlyle's shaking his fist in the face of the divine providence that had given him such a woman.

TO A LITERARY FRIEND IN SORROW.

8th mo., 30, 1888.

Ever since I saw thee in thy beautiful home, I have thought of thee, in the deep sympathy and earnest desire that with the dear memories of the past, hope and aspiration may be blended. I am glad to hear of thy literary work, not only for thy work's sake, but for thyself. I am sure thy experience of love and sorrow (are they ever far apart?) will bear fruit richer and sweeter for the loss and bitterness.

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS WARD.[1]

10th mo., 22, 1888.

I congratulate you from my heart. You have my best wishes for your happiness and the full realization of "the one great purpose of creation, Love, the sole necessity of Earth and Heaven." There is nothing else worth living for. . . . I am not sure I am any better for my long life, any nearer to God, but He seems nearer to me, and that comforts me.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

12th mo., 14, 1888.

The report of the Associated Charities gives me a fuller comprehension of the magnitude as well as the need of the great work you have undertaken. It is the very science of charity; no longer blind instinct of indiscriminate pity, making the poverty it seeks to relieve, but a clear-eyed and wise benevolence, which helps the poor and suffering by aiding them to help themselves. . . . The winter

[1] On the occasion of her marriage.

opens drearily; still I mean to make the most and best of it. If I cannot read in these long evenings, I will think of what I have read; and if I cannot see my friends as often as I wish, I can take pleasure in thinking of them.

TO THE SAME.

12th mo., 19, 1888.

In the intervals of visitations on my birthday I wondered at my age, and if it was possible that I was the little boy on the old Haverhill farm, unknown, and knowing nobody beyond my home horizon. I could not quite make the connection of the white-haired man with the black-locked boy. I could not help a feeling of loneliness, thinking of having outlived so many of my life companions, but I was still grateful to God that I had not outlived my love for them, and for those still living. . . . Among the many tokens of good will from all parts of the country and beyond sea, there were some curious and amusing missives. One "secesh" woman took the occasion to include me in her curse of the "mean, hateful Yankees." To offset this I had a telegram from the Southern Forestry Commission, assembled at De Fanick Springs, Florida, signed by the president and secretary, informing me that "in remembrance of your birthday we have planted a live-oak tree to your memory, which, like the leaves of the tree, will be forever green."

In 1888, Mr. Whittier was asked to join W. D. Howells and others in petitioning the governor of Illinois for a commutation of the sentence of

the Chicago anarchists, who had been condemned to death. He replied that he had always opposed capital punishment, and wished that some other way had been taken in this case to satisfy the demands of justice; but he was not disposed to interfere in behalf of these criminals in preference to other murderers less dangerous to the community than they. This incident was related by a writer in the "New York Tribune," who reported a conversation with Mr. Whittier in a manner that seemed hardly fair to Mr. Howells, who wrote a friendly letter to Whittier about it. This is the poet's reply, dated 12th mo., 19, 1888: —

"I have not the 'Tribune' letter to refer to. I saw it and hastily glanced at it in the midst of interviewers and callers on my birthday, and do not recollect the exact words of the passage referred to in thy note. I see that I should have stated so clearly that I could not be misunderstood the facts of the case, as I remember them, viz.: that I was asked to join thee in petitioning the governor of Illinois to commute the sentence of the anarchists. I think thee stated that thee thought they had not had a fair trial, and that this induced thee to urge the petition. In conversing with the writer of the letter, I think I said that I supposed thee thought that the extreme penalty of death might cause the victims to be regarded as martyrs; and I mentioned that thy interest in Count Tolstoi's non-resistance views, with which I have much sympathy myself, may have influenced thee in this case. The writer of the 'Tribune' letter is a truthful and honorable gentleman, and if his ver-

sion of the matter is incorrect it is doubtless owing to a lack of explicitness on my part, in a desultory conversation. Our relations as authors and friends have been too intimate and pleasant to allow me to even unintentionally misrepresent thee. I would be the last person to believe that the crime charged upon the accused persons is less detestable and awful to thee than to myself."

Mr. Whittier had all his life the care and interest of a statesman in regard to the details of governmental policy, and never resisted the temptation to give his advice, encouragement, and warning to persons in power, especially if they were of his own party and would be likely on that account to listen to him. Notwithstanding his natural modesty and habit of self-depreciation, he realized that his name was one that could be conjured with, in his later years, and did not hesitate to try its powers for any cause in which, or any person in whom, he was interested. In 1887, he wrote to a friend: "I feel sometimes that I have a word to say that is needed, but I have not felt strong enough to write, so the world must get on without my shoulder to the wheel, and I guess it will." His shoulder had been so long at the wheel that it had become the habit of his life, and it was difficult to break himself of it, even when old age and weakness gave him good excuse for inaction. In all great reforms there are among the leaders some narrow and active men who maintain their leadership because so narrow in their views. Of the wedge of reform they make the sharp point. Some one has said of Wesley that he was so intent

upon the work before him that he would not have seen an African bison to the right or left of him. Mr. Whittier had none of this narrowness, but took a wide view of the field in which he worked.

TO THE ESSEX AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

12th mo., 30, 1888.

My ancestors since 1640 have been farmers in Essex County. I was early initiated into the mysteries of farming as it was practiced seventy years ago, and worked faithfully on the old Haverhill homestead until, at the age of thirty years, I was compelled to leave it, greatly to my regret. Ever since, if I have envied anybody, it has been the hale, strong farmer, who could till his own acres, and if he needed help could afford to hire it, because he was able to lead the work himself. I have lived to see a great and favorable change in the farming population of Essex County. The curse of intemperance is now almost unknown among them; the rumseller has no mortgage on their lands. As a rule, they are intelligent, well informed, and healthy, interested in public affairs, self-respectful and respected, independent landholders, fully entitled, if any class is, to the name of gentleman. It may be said that they are not millionaires, and that their annual gains are small. But, on the other hand, the farmer rests secure while other occupations and professions are in constant fear of disaster; his dealing directly and honestly with the Almighty is safer than speculation; his life is no game of chance, and his investments in the earth are better than in stock

companies and syndicates. As to profits, if our farmers could care less for the comfort of themselves and their families, if they could consent to live as their ancestors once lived, and as the pioneers in new countries now live, they could with their present facilities, no doubt, double their incomes. But what a pitiful gain this would be at the expense of the delicacies and refinements that make life worth living. No better proof of real gains can be found than the creation of pleasant homes for the comfort of age and the happiness of youth. When the great English critic Matthew Arnold was in this country, on returning from a visit in Essex County, he remarked that while the land looked to him rough and unproductive, the landlords' houses seemed neat and often elegant. "But where," he asked, "do the tenants, the working people live?" He seemed surprised when I told him that the tenants were the landlords and the workers the owners.

It was in 1888 that the definitive "Riverside" edition of Mr. Whittier's writings was published, in seven volumes, four given to poetry and three to prose. He prepared a number of head-notes upon the general plan adopted in the "Riverside" edition of Longfellow's writings issued two years before, and gave close attention to the final form of the text.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

4th mo., 3, 1889.

Spring is here to-day, warm, bird-full, blossoming with crocuses, snowdrops, and willows. Prob-

ably the east wind will scare her away to-morrow. It seems strange to me that I am here alive to welcome her, when so many have passed away with the winter, and among them that stalwartest of Englishmen, John Bright, sleeping now in the daisied grounds of Rochdale, never more to move the world with his surprising eloquence. How I regret that I have never seen him! We had much in common — in our religious faith, our hatred of war and oppression. His great genius seemed to me to be always held firmly in hand by a sense of duty, and by the practical common sense of a shrewd man of business. He fought through life like an old knight-errant, but without enthusiasm. He had no personal ideals. I remember how he remonstrated with me for my admiration of General Gordon. He looked upon that wonderful personality as a wild fighter, a rash adventurer, doing evil that good might come. He could not see him, as I saw him, giving his life for humanity, alone and unfriended in that dreadful Soudan. He did not like the idea of fighting Satan with Satan's own weapons. Lord Salisbury said truly that he was the greatest orator England had produced; and his eloquence was only called out by what he regarded as the voice of God in his soul.

TO THE SAME.

CONWAY, N. H., 7th mo., 24, 1889.

My cousins and I have been here for the past week, with some other friends of ours. The weather has been delightful, and Chocorua and Moat are looking their best. We have just re-

turned from the banks of the Saco, where it is joined by the Swift River — a very fine bit for a painter.[1] This rainy season has left the mid-summer greener if possible than June, and I never saw the Saco intervales more lovely.

Mr. Whittier had serious misgivings in regard to his poem "The Vow of Washington," written in 1889 for the centennial commemoration of the inauguration of the first President of the Republic, and desired to recall it after it had left his hands. He wrote to a friend: "I heartily wish I had not been over-persuaded to write for the occasion. I am ashamed of it." To a friend who was to attend the celebration, and who made the suggestion that he had better read his own poem to the assembled thousands, he wrote: "I think I see myself shouting my verses in New York! I don't care who reads them. They are not worth much, anyway. If the critics find fault with them, as they will, I shall join with them, as Charles Lamb hissed his own play as heartily as the audience. I scarcely think it will pay for thee to go to the great fuss. I should like to hear Depew if I were fifty years younger and were not jammed and elbowed by a crowd." It was a great relief to him when he found that he had struck a chord to which the whole country responded with enthusiasm. There was a report that Whittier would himself read his centennial

[1] A beautiful picture, in water colors, of the confluence of the two rivers, painted by one of the guests, and presented to him, was a much prized souvenir.

poem, and President Barnard wrote to him to make his home with him while in New York. To this Whittier replied : —

My dear old Friend of the old days, — I have authorized no such "public notice" as thy letter speaks of. The idea of reading my own verses to a New York audience is utterly absurd. But I would be glad to visit New York, if for no other reason than to accept the kind invitation of thyself and thy wife ; but I am hardly in condition to travel far from home. I often think of thee and of the pleasant Hartford days, and wish I could meet thee again. What a way we have traveled since we met under the Charter Oak ! We have both reason to be thankful to the good Providence which has brought us thus far.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

September 2, 1889.

Here I am at your side among the octogenarians. At seventy we are objects of veneration ; at eighty, of curiosity ; at ninety, of wonder ; and if we reach a hundred we are candidates for a side show attached to Barnum's great exhibition. You know all about it. You know why I have not thanked you before this for your beautiful and precious tribute, which would make any birthday memorable. I remember how you were overwhelmed with tributes on the occasion of your own eightieth birthday, and you can understand the impossibility I find before me of responding in any fitting shape to all the tokens of friendship

which I receive. . . . I hope, dear Whittier, that you find much to enjoy in the midst of all the lesser trials which old age must bring with it. You have kind friends all around you, and the love and homage of your fellow-countrymen as few have enjoyed, with the deep satisfaction of knowing that you have earned them, not merely by the gifts of your genius, but by a noble life which has ripened without a flaw into a grand and serene old age. I never see my name coupled with yours, as it often is nowadays, without feeling honored by finding myself in such company, and wishing that I were more worthy of it. . . . I am living here with my daughter-in-law, and just as I turned this leaf I heard wheels at the door, and she got out, leading in in triumph her husband, His Honor, Judge Holmes of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, just arrived from Europe, by the Scythia. I look up to him as my magistrate, and he knows me as his father, but my arms are around his neck and his moustache is sweeping my cheek — I feel young again at fourscore.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

11th mo., 7, 1889.

There is very little of actual suffering which may not be traced to intemperance, idleness, and utter lack of economy, wasteful and careless of the future when wages are good. We need the gospel of Poor Richard's Almanac sadly. Last summer, in Conway, I found a town without a poor-house, because there was nobody that needed it. There

were no rich men, but the village was a model of neatness, every house freshly painted and comfortable. The young clergyman had a salary of $400 a year, and I was told that the cost of living was less than $300 per family. There was no liquor allowed in the place. The small savings bank had a deposit of $80,000. With economy, sobriety, and the absence of ostentation, display, and extravagance, the example of Conway might be imitated in our country towns, and to some extent in our cities. But I suppose this is not to be expected. The poor we shall always have with us — until Bellamy's millennium.

TO THE SAME.

12th mo., 12, 1889.

I came to Amesbury yesterday, where I hope my birthday will pass quietly. As life draws nearer the close, one feels desirous to be near the old home and the unforgotten landscape of youth, and to muse by the same fireside where our dear ones used to sit.

TO GEORGE B. LORING.

12th mo., 1889.

It was a very beautiful and fitting thing for the minister of the United States at Lisbon to offer his apartments to Dom Pedro, — the noble ex-emperor, who carried with him into retirement the love and respect of the world. Will thee give him my sincerest love, and tell him that were our dear Longfellow living he would join me in affectionate remembrances.

GEORGE B. LORING TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

LISBON, December 22, 1889.

I was happy in being able to make the old emperor comfortable. He looks very old, has no light or joy in his face, and dwells on the past with touching devotion. He talks of you and Longfellow and Agassiz, and Alexander Agassiz and Quincy Shaw, as if you had all been his brothers.

Mr. Whittier's eighty-second birthday was spent quietly at Amesbury. The day was observed quite generally in the schools throughout the country. The school children of Amesbury marched in procession to his house, and he made a few remarks to them. One of the gifts he received was a beautiful phial of gold sand from Africa, the golden cover of which was ornamented with a fine sapphire and a clasp of diamonds. This was from Abby Hutchinson Patton, to whom he wrote: "Thy name recalls the noble men and women who devoted their lives to the holy cause of freedom. None more worthily bore their part in the great contest than thy brothers and thyself. I always think of dear N. P. Rogers when I think of you. How he loved you and your songs!"

Among the letters and gifts which came to him from all parts of the United States, and from other countries, on these occasions, none touched him more deeply and gave him more pleasure than the affectionate remembrances of the students in the seminaries of the colored people at the South. Their gratitude and reverence for their benefactor

were expressed in many quaint ways. On more than one occasion, he received barrels of pitch-pine kindlings for his fire, from the colored schools of Alabama and other Gulf States.

When wearied by a prolonged conversation in his garden room, his never-failing resource was to go to the closet for a stick of wood for his fire, or for a choice pear he had been ripening for his guest. The thread of many a long-winded discourse was broken by such devices. Dr. Maria Dowdell-Wilson, who was for a large part of her life a neighbor, and always an intimate friend, says of his care of the fire: —

"That fire was a perpetual source of pleasure and annoyance to us all. It was an old-fashioned Franklin stove, that smoked on the slightest provocation, and scattered the ashes over the hearth. At the same time it had a habit of throwing out the most charming gleams and shadows, especially if drift-wood was being burned. Mr. Whittier was very jealous of any one else tending or poking the fire. Often I have unconsciously taken the tongs to touch up a brand, when his hand would stay mine, and he would say, 'Thee must not touch that, it is just right,' and perhaps the next minute he would have the tongs and do just what I had attempted. I have frequently gone in at twilight and found him lying on the lounge, watching the flitting shadows, and repeating aloud from some favorite author, generally Scott or Burns. His mood and conversation at such times were particularly delightful. The beautiful poem 'Burning Drift-Wood' was doubtless inspired by such experiences."

Mrs. Pitman wrote to him in 1885: "You were a veritable fire-worshiper. I see you coming from the closet, bringing wood. Now I see you by the stove, *sitting on nothing*. You had a firm backbone, as was suitable to a Quaker and an old abolitionist." The attitude to which reference is here made will be recognized by all who knew him in his home. He never stooped as do most people when they reach to a level below their knees, but came down upon his right knee with the bent left knee thrown forward, holding his body perfectly upright. This attitude was assumed whenever he had occasion to pick up anything, when he teased the cat, when he took a book from a low shelf, and when he tended his fire.

One of the birthday gifts in 1889 was a handsome portfolio from Herman Marcus, a New York merchant, containing a picture of a golden vase, exquisitely graceful in form, and ornamented with garlands of delicate flowers. It had for inscription, "May in the smallest part thy sorrows lie concealed, and all the rest be filled with joy to overflowing." It was accompanied by a letter explaining that the conception of the vase, with its allegory and legend, originated in a delightful dream at the mountain home of Mr. Marcus, which is near Centre Harbor.

TO LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

2d mo., 1890.

My dear cousin Gertrude read in her beautiful way thy poems under the head of "The Still Hour," and was greatly moved by their pathetic

power. I wish thee could have her serene, clear faith in the future life. But I think it will come to thee some time. Emerson once said to me, "If there is a future life for us, it is well; if there is not, it is well also." For myself, I trust in the mercy of the All Merciful. What is best for us we shall have, and Life and Love are best.

TO LUCY LARCOM.

2d mo., 28, 1890.

I do not wonder that "the Church" commends itself to thy mind and heart, so far as it is represented by Phillips Brooks. But I am too much of a Quaker to find a home there. Quakerism has no church of its own — it belongs to the Church Universal and Invisible.

A few weeks of the summer of 1890 were spent by Mr. Whittier at a quiet and pleasant place on the Piscataqua River, in Eliot, Maine, known as "Green Acre." Writing from this place to his old friend Mrs. Elizabeth Gay, of Staten Island, he says: "I have been staying here for the last fortnight, — my first outing in nearly a year. It is a quiet hotel on the banks of the Piscataqua River, new, neat, and comfortable, and not near enough to the railroad to be crowded. My cousins Joseph and Gertrude Cartland are with me. . . . Has thee read Dr. Holmes's new poem in the last 'Atlantic Monthly'? At eighty-one he is as witty as ever. If I may not imitate his light-hearted verse, I am thankful I can enjoy it."

Mr. Whittier took great interest in the deaf and

the blind, and had friends and correspondents among those who had the misfortune to be deprived of sight and hearing. Selections from his works were printed in raised letters for the use of the blind, in the Perkins Institution at South Boston. In the summer of 1890, he wrote to little Helen Keller, who is both deaf and blind, and on his next birthday he received from her an affectionate reply, written with her own hand in the square characters she had been taught to make with the apparatus invented for the use of the blind. This is her letter: —

DEAR KIND POET, — This is your birthday: that was the first thought which came into my mind when I awoke this morning, and it made me glad to think I could write you a letter and tell you how much your little blind friends love their sweet poet and his birthday. This evening they are going to entertain their friends with readings from your poems and music. I hope the swift-winged messenger of love will be here to carry some of the sweet melody to you in your little study by the Merrimac. At first I was very sorry when I found that the sun had hidden himself behind dull clouds, but afterwards I thought why he did so, and then I was happy. The sun knows that you like to see the world covered with beautiful snow, so he kept back all of his brightness so that the little crystals could form in the sky, and when they are ready they will softly fall and tenderly cover every object. Then the sun will appear in all his radiance and fill the world with light. If I

were with you to-day I would give you eighty-three kisses, one for each year you have lived. Eighty-three years seems very long to me. Does it seem long to you? I wonder how many years there will be in eternity. I am afraid I cannot think about so much time. I received the letter which you wrote to me last summer, and I thank you for it. I am staying in Boston now, at the Institution for the Blind, but I have not commenced my studies yet, because my dearest friend, Mr. Anagnos, wants me to rest and play a great deal. Teacher is well and sends her kind remembrances to you. The happy Christmas time is almost here! I can hardly wait for the fun to begin! I hope your Christmas Day will be a very happy one and that the new year will be full of brightness and joy for you and every one.

From your loving little friend,

HELEN A. KELLER.

To this letter Mr. Whittier replied: —

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND, — I was very glad to have such a pleasant letter on my birthday. I had two or three hundred others, and thine was one of the most welcome of all. I must tell thee about how the day passed at Oak Knoll. Of course, the sun did not shine, but we had great open wood fires in the rooms, which were all very sweet with roses and other flowers, which were sent to me from distant friends; and fruits of all kinds from California and other places. Some relatives and dear old friends were with me through the day. I

do not wonder thee think eighty-three years a long time, but to me it seems but a very little while since I was a boy no older than thee, playing on the old farm at Haverhill. I thank thee for all thy good wishes, and wish thee as many. I am glad thee is at the Institution; it is an excellent place. Give my best regards to Miss Sullivan, and with a great deal of love I am thy old friend.

In 1890 Mr. Whittier published for private circulation among his friends the little volume of his latest poems, entitled "At Sundown," which two years later was given to the public, with additional poems. It included "Burning Drift-Wood," "The Captain's Well," "Haverhill," "The Last Eve of Summer," and quite a number of shorter pieces, written during the year. When Mr. Whittier wrote "The Captain's Well," he had the impression that Captain Valentine Bagley was at the time of his shipwreck the master of the vessel, and that he was the head of a family. But when he learned, after the publication of the poem, that he was then a young man, unmarried, he changed the second stanza to correspond with the facts. The original version was: —

> "Back to his home, where wife and child,
> Who had mourned him lost, with joy were wild."

As amended it stands: —

> "And like one from the dead, the threshold crossed
> Of his wondering home, that had mourned him lost."

Of this poem James Russell Lowell wrote: "Your 'Captain's Well' seems to me in your hap-

piest vein, — a vein peculiarly your own. Tears came to my eyes as I read it."

TO LUCY LARCOM.

5th mo., 9, 1891.

As I could not hear Phillips Brooks if I went to his church, I prefer he should be bishop. The very air of Massachusetts seems more free and sweet for his election. It is a great step forward. He is bishop, not only of the Episcopal Church, but of all New England!

A part of the summer of 1891 was spent by Mr. Whittier and his friends at a quiet hotel in Wakefield, N. H. His health was not up to even its usual standard, but he longed to be again among his favorite hills, and this place was chosen for its easy access, its bracing air, and the beauty of its surroundings; but his stay at Wakefield was shortened, as at Conway two years before, by increased feebleness, which called him back to Newburyport and the care of his physician.

TO OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

NEWBURYPORT, 8th mo., 18, 1891.

Ever since I heard the sad news of Lowell's death, I have been thinking of thee, and longing to see thee, for we are now standing alone. The bright, beautiful ones who began life with us have all passed into the great shadow of silence, or rather, let us hope, in the language of Henry Vaughan, "They have gone into the world of light, and we alone are lingering here!" Well, I at

least shall soon follow them, and I wait the call with a calm trust in the Eternal Goodness. I have been ill all summer, but the world is still fair to me; my friends are very dear to me; I love and am loved. And it is a great joy to me that I can think of thee as well, and in the full enjoyment of all thy gifts and powers, surrounded still with friends who love and honor thee.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Beverly Farms, September 3, 1891.

I am longing to see you, and if you are coming to Danvers, you must expect me to drive over for an hour's talk with you. As I have often said, we, — that is, you and I — now, are no longer on a raft, but we are on a spar. I have been well in general health, but have had a good deal of asthma. This climate is too cool and rough for me, but I have found much that is delightful about my residence here. Perhaps the fault is not so much in latitude 42 degrees, as in æt. 82.

TO OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

9th mo., 8, 1891.

I am most happy to know that I may expect a visit from thee as soon as the present wet weather permits. I need not tell thee how glad I shall be to see thee before I let go that "spar" and leave it to thee alone. This climate is hard upon us, but it is a part of our New England, and I would not exchange for any other. Danton would not run away from the guillotine because he could not carry France off with him on his boots.

TO THE SAME.

9th mo., 21, 1891.

DEAR HOLMES, — The last and noblest word has been spoken by thy lines on Lowell. As a work of artistic beauty and fitness it has no rival in our literature, and it will last as long as his ode on Lincoln — and that is saying much. Thanks to our Heavenly Father that He has given thee the power to write it!

Mr. Whittier wrote his lines on James Russell Lowell and two other poems this year, "The Birthday Wreath" and "Between the Gates."

In November, 1891, Whittier was again in Newburyport, and it is a coincidence of some interest that the residence of his cousin, Joseph Cartland, where he spent so many of his later days, was once occupied by the Hon. Edward St. Loe Livermore, who represented the Essex District in Congress from 1807 to 1812, and who was the father of the eccentric Harriet Livermore, the "not unfeared, half-welcome guest" alluded to in "Snow-Bound." On the occasion of his eighty-fourth and last birthday, sixty members of the Whittier Club of Haverhill, his native town, called in the morning, bringing with their congratulations eighty-four roses encircled with a scarf, upon the ends of which were etchings of Whittier's birthplace and the old schoolhouse of his boyhood. Three of his aged schoolmates added to the interest of the occasion by their presence: Mrs. Warren Ordway of Bradford, Thomas B. Garland of Dover, N. H., and Hon. James H. Carleton of Haverhill. Mr. Whit-

tier greatly enjoyed this opportunity to recall incidents of his youth. Another of his school friends who came was Mrs. Bartlett, mother of William Francis Bartlett, to whom Whittier paid the tribute commencing: —

> "Oh, well may Essex sit forlorn
> Beside her sea-blown shore;
> Her well-beloved, her noblest born
> Is hers in life no more!"

In reply to the congratulatory address of George C. How, president of the Whittier Club, Mr. Whittier made one of the very few speeches of his life, in which he said that, the proverb to the contrary, he had found that a prophet is sometimes honored in his own country. The rooms of the spacious house were filled with birthday gifts, and telegrams, express packages, and letters were constantly being received. Mr. Whittier manifested a lively interest in whatever was going on, and greeted each visitor in the most cordial manner. He particularly enjoyed the calls of his life-long friend, Charles F. Coffin of Lynn, of Mrs. Fields, Mrs. Claflin, Sarah Orne Jewett, Alice Freeman Palmer, Francis J. Garrison, and Harriet McEwen Kimball. This tender greeting came from Phillips Brooks: "I have no right, save that which love and gratitude and reverence may give, to say how devoutly I thank God that you have lived, that you are living, and that you will always live."

As evening approached, and the last guest departed, Mr. Whittier did not seem as much fatigued as on some previous occasions of a similar character. He joined the family at the tea-table

with his accustomed cheerfulness, recalling many pleasant incidents of the day, and the delightful meetings with old friends, and remarking that he had never passed a more comfortable and happy birthday.

Among the letters received was this from Dr. Holmes: "I congratulate you upon having climbed another glacier and crossed another crevasse in your ascent of the white summit which already begins to see the morning twilight of the coming century. A life so well filled as yours has been cannot be too long for your fellow-men. In their affections you are secure, whether you are with them here or near them in some higher life than theirs. I hope your years have not become a burden, so that you are tired of living. At our age we must live chiefly in the past: happy is he who has a past like yours to look back upon. It is one of the felicitous incidents — I will not say accidents — of my life that the lapse of time has brought us very near together, so that I frequently find myself honored by seeing my name mentioned in near connection with your own. We are lonely, very lonely, in these last years. The image which I have used before this in writing to you recurs once more to my thought. We were on deck together as we began the voyage of life two generations ago. A whole generation passed and the succeeding one found us in the cabin, with a goodly number of coevals. Then the craft which held us began going to pieces, until a few of us were left on the raft pieced together of its fragments. And now the raft has at last parted, and you and I are left

clinging to the solitary spar, which is all that still remains afloat of the sunken vessel.

"I have just been looking over the headstones in Mr. Griswold's cemetery, entitled 'The Poets and Poetry of America.' In that venerable receptacle, just completing its half century of existence — for the date of the edition before me is 1842 — I find the names of John Greenleaf Whittier and Oliver Wendell Holmes next each other, in their due order, as they should be. All around are the names of the dead — too often of forgotten dead. Three which I see there are still living: Mr. John Osborne Sargent, who makes Horace his own by faithful study and ours by scholarly translation; Isaac McLellan, who was writing in 1830, and whose last work is dated 1886; and Christopher P. Cranch, whose poetical gift has too rarely found expression. Of these many dead you are the most venerated, revered, and beloved survivor; of these few living, the most honored representative. Long may it be before you leave a world where your influence has been so beneficent, where your example has been such inspiration, where you are so truly loved, and where your presence is a perpetual benediction."

Among the telegrams received on his last birthday was one from the Indian poetess of Ontario, E. Pauline Johnson, who said, "Your young Mohawk friend asks for you to-day the Great Spirit's blessing." Another dispatch was received from an Indian girl whom Whittier had befriended. Seven hundred students of Vassar College united in sending a telegram, and pupils of the Gloucester

high school sent congratulations, "to our loved singer, the wood-thrush of Essex."

His old friend, Dr. Henry I. Bowditch, wrote: "How beautiful is this uprising of a people to do the poet honor for life-long defense of liberty and righteousness. I do so wish to see you at least once more in this world, but I quiet that desire at times by repeating some of your poetry, which has been such a blessing to all of us." To this Whittier replied: "Like thee I am mostly confined to the house, and I am finding the weight of years heavy to bear. But I thank God that my love for the old friends still left is deeper than ever." About three weeks later, Miss Olivia Y. Bowditch thus announced to Mr. Whittier the death of her father: "My father's love for you makes me wish to tell you myself that his burden, so bravely borne, is laid down, and we can think of him at rest. I should also like to tell you that all through the summer, when often his spirit was heavy, I would read to him from your poems, as we sat together, and he would invariably say that strength had come to him from your words. Your last note to him he deeply prized, and it made him very happy."

Among the pleasant testimonials received by Mr. Whittier was a letter from James W. Taylor, United States consul at Winnipeg, Manitoba, informing him that at midnight, with the last stroke of the clock ushering in the seventeenth day of December, 1891, the eighty-fourth anniversary of his birth, the bells of Saint Boniface, commemorated in his beautiful lyric "The Red River Voyageur," rang a joy peal, at the suggestion of

Lieutenant-Governor John Schultz, and by direction of His Grace Archbishop Tâché. This delicate compliment was subsequently acknowledged by Whittier in the following letter: —

"During my illness from the prevailing epidemic, which confined me nearly the whole winter, and from which I am but very slowly recovering, a letter from the United States consul at Winnipeg informed me of thy pleasant recognition of my little poem, 'The Red River Voyageur' (written nearly forty years ago), by the ringing of the bells of Saint Boniface on the eve of my late anniversary. I was at the time quite unable to respond, but I feel that I should be wanting in due appreciation of such a marked compliment if I did not, even at this late hour, express to thee my heartfelt thanks. I have reached an age when literary success and manifestations of popular favor have ceased to satisfy one upon whom the solemnity of life's sunset is resting; but such a delicate and beautiful tribute has deeply moved me. I shall never forget it. I shall hear the bells of Saint Boniface sounding across the continent, and awakening a feeling of gratitude for thy generous act."

Probably the birthday of no other man, certainly of no private citizen, was ever so widely and spontaneously observed during his lifetime as were the anniversaries of Whittier's birth, during his last few years. His great heart, which for a long life had been giving out of its wealth, until by general consent he was recognized as the "laureate of the affections," was receiving in return the love and

reverence of the whole people in many remarkable demonstrations. He left several albums filled with these birthday tributes.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

NEWBURYPORT, 12th mo., 29, 1891.

The best thing on my birthday was to meet thee and our dear Sarah on the stairs, and the worst was that you went away so soon. Looking at the wreath which still hangs all right in our dining-room, I am tempted to let myself down to poetry: —

"Blossom and greenness, making all
The wintry birthday tropical,
And the plain Quaker parlors gay,
Have died on bracket, stand, and wall.
I saw them fade and droop and fall,
And laid them tenderly away.

"White virgin lilies, mignonette,
Blown rose and pink and violet, —
A breath of fragrance passing by,
A dream of beauty and decay,
Colors and shapes which could not stay, —
The fairest, sweetest, first to die.

"But still this rustic wreath of thine
Of wintergreen, and bay, and pine,
The wild growths of our forest land,
Woven and wound with careful pains,
And tender wish and prayer, remains,
As when it dropped from love's dear hand."[1]

[1] Considerable changes were made in these lines afterward, two new verses were added, and the poem as thus completed was included in *At Sundown*, under the title *The Birthday Wreath*.

TO THE SAME.

NEWBURYPORT, 1st mo., 29, 1892.

I am glad to be able to hold the pen once more in proof that the terrible "grippe" has relaxed its hold. I have been very near the border-land, — so near that the world seemed to drop away from me, and nothing was left but trust and love. I am still very weak, though I sit up several hours a day.

The severe attack to which he refers in this letter nearly proved fatal, but as spring advanced he gained strength, and when able to leave his room and rejoin the family in the library, he remarked that at times he had hardly expected to pass down the hall stairs again, but was thankful for the calm trust and perfect rest with which he was favored; "not an anxiety," he added, "not a care; it was not ecstasy, but inexpressible peace."

With improving health he began to suggest little plans for the coming summer, saying he hoped to visit Centre Harbor once more, and asking his cousins, the Cartlands, if they would accompany him. By the latter part of April he was able to spend a few weeks in Danvers, and in May he was again in Amesbury, to meet his friends in what proved his last Quarterly Meeting. As summer approached, and his strength seemed insufficient for the journey to Centre Harbor, he proposed spending a little time with his friend Sarah A. Gove, at "Elmfield," Hampton Falls, N. H., seven miles from Amesbury, and to take Centre Harbor later, if it seemed advisable.

Here, in company with congenial friends, and

sheltered from wearisome intrusion, he was often heard to say, "I have not known such a rest as this for forty years; not one pilgrim for three weeks!" He had been familiar with the place from his boyhood, the house having been occupied by friends of his family for several generations. Thus favorably situated his strength improved. He was in the frequent practice of taking short walks, to the post office and other points near by, and sometimes wandered as far as the falls, and enjoyed the beautiful river-path. He would occasionally drive about among his former haunts. In the immediate vicinity was the home of the Rev. Stephen Bachilder, whom he thought to be his maternal ancestor, and he took a lively interest in all the historic associations of the place.[1]

He would sometimes make facetious reference to Miss Gove's descent from the Edward Gove who figured in the history of New Hampshire as the leader in "Gove's rebellion," and who was captured, tried, condemned, and sentenced to be hanged, but who for some reason (perhaps the death of Charles II.) escaped execution of the sentence, and was finally released from imprisonment in the Tower of London, and returned to his home in New Hampshire. An English fowling-

[1] The house in which the revolutionary governor, Meshech Weare, lived and died, and where Washington was entertained when he visited New England in 1788, was within easy walking distance; his steps were frequently turned in that direction, where a cordial welcome always awaited him. He would examine with much curiosity the paneled staircase and partitions, and the hunting scenes depicted upon the heavy wall-papers, some of which were fastened to the walls by hand-made nails instead of paste.

piece, ornamented with a golden serpent set in its stock, said to have been given him by the king, is one of the relics of Miss Gove's spirited ancestor, now in her possession.

Among the few letters written by Mr. Whittier in the month of August were the two that follow.

TO FRANCES E. WILLARD.

HAMPTON FALLS, N. H., 8th mo., 11, 1892.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND, — I cannot let cousin Gertrude's letter go without expressing my deep and tender sympathy with thee. I know what it is to lose a mother, — a loss I have never forgotten. But how much we have to be thankful for in the blessed assurance that all is well with our dear ones!

> "Go, call for the mourner and raise the lament;
> Let the tresses be torn and the garments be rent;
> But give to the living the passion of tears,
> Who walk in a valley of sadness and fears;
> Who are pressed in the combat, in darkness are lost;
> But weep not for those who shall sorrow no more,
> Whose warfare is ended, whose trial is o'er.
> Let the song be exalted, triumphant the chord,
> And rejoice for the dead who die in the Lord!"

I am sure the calling hence of thy beloved mother will only stimulate thee in thy work for the living. We can leave our dead with the Lord; they are safe with Him. His blessing be with thee!

TO ELISABETH CAVAZZA.

HAMPTON FALLS, 8th mo., 19, 1892.

I don't believe that half of the nice things the papers are saying of thy little book reach thee.

Here is a clipping from the "Dial," the best and ablest literary paper in the country. With loving remembrance from thy friend.

He read more or less each day, keeping well informed of current events, and was seldom absent from the morning Bible readings. His only literary work during the summer, beside the attention that he gave to his correspondence, was the writing of the poem addressed to Oliver Wendell Holmes upon his eighty-third birthday, August 29, and correcting the proof of his new volume "At Sundown," which was then going through the press.

TO OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

HAMPTON FALLS, N. H., 8th mo., 26, 1892.

DEAR HOLMES, — I intended to write something for thy birthday, but the thought suggested itself that I might get it into the September "Atlantic." I wrote some verses in a great hurry, as I knew the time of publication was near. A friend copied them and omitted one verse. I discovered the mistake and sent the "missing link," but it was too late.[1] I send with this the poem as I wrote it. It was written on the hottest day of the season, and that must excuse its defects. With a great deal of love, thy friend.

[1] This mistake seriously annoyed Mr. Whittier, but in a letter about it to his publishers he said pleasantly, "I think anybody who undertakes to make verses in his eighty-fifth year, on the hottest day of the hottest season, deserves to suffer for it."

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS WARD.[1]

HAMPTON FALLS, N. H., 8th mo., 30, 1892.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I write no letters now. But I went to my room to tell thee how I liked thy strong and noble poem in the "Atlantic" ["The Lost Colors"], when my mail came with thy most kind note. I thank thee most warmly for it. It was a curious coincidence. God bless thee!

Affectionately, JOHN G. WHITTIER.

The perfect freedom he felt in the home of his friend was observed by visitors, as he escorted them through the rooms, calling attention to various attractions and pointing out fine views from the windows, and the magnificent elms upon the lawn, dating back to the colonial days, one of which, by his own measurement, had a trunk eighteen feet eight inches in circumference, and another seventeen feet. But the tender personal associations had a charm for him beyond even the beauties of the landscape, and one day, when sitting under the trees with a group of young people around him, he exclaimed with much enthusiasm, "This is a very sweet spot to me: I used to come here with my mother."

On the wide balcony upon which the door of his room opened he passed many happy hours, looking admiringly out upon the broad Hampton meadows and watching the distant ships. His poems, "The New Wife and the Old," "Hampton Beach," "The Wreck of Rivermouth," and

[1] This is one of three letters written on this day — the last letters he ever wrote.

House at Hampton Falls, N. H., in which Whittier died.

others, were suggested by scenes and incidents in this neighborhood.

After a few weeks at Hampton Falls his cousin alluded to his intention of spending some time at Centre Harbor, and asked if he still had it in prospect, to which he replied: "I have been thinking about it, but have given it up, it is so pleasant here, and we are having such a comfortable, happy summer; but," he added, with his usual thoughtfulness for others, "if any of you wish to go there, I will remain here in your absence." His conclusion was equally satisfactory to his friends, and the party continued unbroken the rest of the summer.

The "last eve of summer," which he so pathetically commemorated two years before, found him prostrated by illness, suffering from such an attack as he was liable to at that season of the year, and which he himself was inclined to regard lightly. The remedies used not having the desired effect, his physician, Dr. J. A. Douglass of Amesbury, was called, and under his treatment he became much better; the third day he felt so well that he walked across the hall and joined his friends in cheerful conversation, proposing to return to Newburyport early the next week. On the morning of September 3, shortly after rising, he experienced a paralytic shock, which so affected his right side that he was confined to his bed, and the condition of his throat was such that speaking and taking medicines and nourishment were extremely difficult. When his illness assumed this serious character, and there seemed slight hope of his rallying, his friends who were with him feared

he might regret his absence from home, as he had many times expressed a hope that his last illness might be in Amesbury, where his beloved mother and sister had lived and died; but he accepted his situation with sweet composure, often saying in slowly uttered and broken sentences, "It is all right — everybody is so kind."

His consideration for the feelings of his correspondents was shown in a marked way in the last week of his life. There came to him from a Western State a letter from an author of whom he had never before heard, who said he had sent him a volume of his poems for which he had received no acknowledgment. Then followed an impudent lecture upon his duty in such a case. "A letter of acknowledgment and a volume of his own works should have been sent," as had been done by other poets, who were named. No one could read such a letter without anger at its insolence and presumption. When Mr. Whittier's letters were being read to him, and his attendant came to this, it was supposed that he would do no more than have his angry correspondent informed that his book had not reached him as he was away from home, and that this ungracious letter was the first intimation he had received of his existence. But he said, "No, that is not enough; the poor man does not know the circumstances, which must be explained to him pleasantly, and directions must be sent to my publishers to have a volume of my works forwarded to him." This was done, and his correspondent probably received both book and letter after the telegraph had announced to him that his unkind letter had been sent to a dying man.

Dr. Francis A. Howe, of Newburyport, a beloved personal friend, as well as skillful physician, was in daily attendance with Dr. Douglass, and Dr. Sarah Ellen Palmer, of Boston, remained in the house, rendering efficient service by her wise counsel and sympathy. From the first, he seemed fully aware of his critical condition, often assuring his friends of his entire resignation and his trust that all would be well. The day before his death he alluded feelingly to the kindness and tender care he had received, saying to his physicians and attendants, "You have done all that love and human skill could do; I thank you." Sometimes when his medicine was brought to him he would say, "It is of no use; I am worn out." He maintained the same patient, trustful, peaceful spirit that so beautifully marked his long and suffering illness the previous winter. "Love — love to all the world" and similar expressions were frequently on his lips. He had been subject to sleeplessness all his life, and usually with open eyes greeted the first signs of day. He had always preferred a sleeping-room in which he could watch from his bed the rising sun, and it had been his custom to raise the shades of his chamber windows that the early light might have no obstruction. On the morning before his death, when there seemed a prospect of his sleeping, the nurse quietly drew down the shades to darken the room; he observed this, and exclaiming, "No, no," made a quick, upward gesture, with the only hand which could obey the mastership it had owned so many years, and for the last time he enjoyed the mystery

of the brightening heavens. In the afternoon unfavorable symptoms increased, and he seemed at times unconscious, but when asked by his niece if he recognized her, he replied, "I have known thee all the time." These were his last audible words. He had been spared much acute pain, and seemed realizing what he had once written when alluding to a beloved friend who was suffering greatly with no hope of relief: "Happy are they to whom the solemn angel comes unannounced and quietly, and who are mercifully spared a long baptism of suffering." He lay through the night apparently in a quiet sleep, and with the dawn of another morning, and under the overshadowing of Infinite Peace, which was sweetly felt by all present, his pure spirit passed upward to the never-ending day. His death occurred on the 7th of September, 1892, at the age of eighty-four years, eight months, and twenty-one days.

On the announcement of his death the flags upon the public buildings in Haverhill and Amesbury were placed at half mast, and the citizens were informed of the event by eighty-four strokes upon the bells. The Mayor of Haverhill, Thomas E. Burnham, issued the following proclamation: —

"With feelings of unfeigned sorrow the people of our city will receive the sad intelligence of the death at Hampton Falls, N. H., of Haverhill's most illustrious son, John Greenleaf Whittier. It would be idle at this time to attempt to recount his labors, or to describe his achievements. As a man of letters the world bears record of his fame. His genius was unexcelled. His purity of thought

and life, his compassion for the unfortunate, and his heart, that was ever open for his kind, stamp him as one who will receive the honor and homage of every nation and every tongue. But to us, the people of the city that gave him birth, there is a still tenderer tie. It was here that he spent his childhood, and received his early inspiration; here he wrought in the same industries by which we earn our daily bread. Our hills, our woods, our lakes, and our traditions furnished themes for his gifted pen. Nay, we have felt the strength of his citizenship and the warmth of his love, and it is with peculiar and heartfelt sorrow that we mourn for our own.

"In token of this sorrow, the house in which he was born will be appropriately draped in mourning; the flags upon the public buildings will remain at half mast until after the obsequies; the bells upon the city hall and churches will be tolled, and the city offices will be closed during the funeral hour; at that time the teachers in the public schools will lay aside all other duties, and cause appropriate mention to be made of his character and works, — that our citizens may give proper expression to the universal lament."

The citizens of Danvers, also, and other places manifested their sorrow by similar tokens of respect and affection.

On the afternoon of September 9, with the tolling of the village church bell, the people at Hampton Falls, who had known and loved him while there, came to pay their last tribute of affection, and his remains were borne away to the

Amesbury home, the church bells of Seabrook and Salisbury sending forth their mournful peals as the procession passed. The funeral services were held the next day. Thousands of people availed themselves of an opportunity to look upon the face of the poet, as the body lay in the little parlor, beneath the portraits of his mother and sister. Many came from neighboring cities and towns, and each railway train brought numbers of friends from a distance. The city government of Haverhill came in a body, and also the Whittier Club of Haverhill. Mr. Whittier had expressed in his will a desire that his funeral should be conducted in "the plain and quiet way of the Society of Friends," with which he was "connected by birthright as well as by settled conviction of the truth of its principles and the importance of its testimonies." The house being far too small to receive the large number of persons who were expected to be present, the services were held in the garden; and the day was most propitious for an out-door gathering. Seats for several hundreds were arranged around a myrtle-carpeted plat under the "garden room" windows, and other hundreds stood under the fruit trees in the rear. Boys clambered into the branches of the trees, and their bare feet, hanging over the heads of the assembled multitude, could not fail to suggest that it was the author of "The Barefoot Boy" to whose memory they were paying tribute.

Brief addresses were made by several ministers of the Society of Friends, and Judge Des Brisay of Nova Scotia, Rev. Dr. Fiske of Newburyport,

and Caroline H. Dall of Washington. The last speaker was Edmund Clarence Stedman, of New York, whose every word, uttered with deep feeling, had the weight of a trained artist's judgment, and glowed with the love of one poet soul for another. As a fitting conclusion of the impressive ceremony there arose the sweet voices of the Hutchinsons, who were endeared to Whittier by the friendship of many years, and by their active participation in his anti-slavery labors. They sang "Under the Clover" and "Close his eyes, his work is done."

Mr. Whittier's remains were interred in the village cemetery, in the section reserved for the Society of Friends. His lot is surrounded by a well-kept arbor vitæ hedge. At the corner where his brother is buried is a tall cedar, and at the foot of his own grave is another symmetrical tree of the same kind. Between him and his brother lie their father and mother, their two sisters, their aunt Mercy and uncle Moses. These comprise the whole family commemorated in the poem "Snow-Bound." Plain marble tablets, all exactly alike, mark these graves, and the poet's tombstone, afterward erected, is of the same simple pattern. The cemetery is upon an eminence overlooking the valley of the Powow in which nestles the thriving village of Amesbury; and the broad waters of the noble Merrimac, here a tidal stream, are close at hand, with the hills of old Newbury beyond. It is a spot midway between his birthplace and the place where he died, — a fit resting-place for him whose verse has celebrated every phase of the scenery it overlooks. Hither

for all time will come those who love the memory and admire the genius of the prophet of freedom, the poet of New England life.

Mr. Whittier died at the early dawn of a lovely September day; it was at the close of a day equally perfect that his casket was lowered to a bed of roses in a grave lined with ferns and golden-rod.

The tribute of Dr. Holmes to the memory of his friend may here be appropriately given: —

"Thou, too, hast left us. While with heads bowed low,
And sorrowing hearts, we mourned our summer's dead,
The flying season bent its Parthian bow,
And yet again our mingling tears were shed.

"Was Heaven impatient that it could not wait
The blasts of winter for earth's fruits to fall?
Were angels crowding round the open gate
To greet the spirits coming at their call?

"Nay, let not fancies, born of old beliefs,
Play with the heart-beats that are throbbing still,
And waste their outworn phrases on the griefs,
The silent griefs, that words can only chill.

"For thee, dear friend, there needs no high-wrought lay,
To shed its aureole round thy cherished name, —
Thou whose plain, home-born speech of *Yea* and *Nay*
Thy truthful nature ever best became.

"Death reaches not a spirit such as thine, —
It can but steal the robe that hid thy wings;
Though thy warm breathing presence we resign,
Still in our hearts its loving semblance clings.

"Peaceful thy message, yet for struggling right, —
When Slavery's gauntlet in our face was flung, —
While timid weaklings watched the dubious fight,
No herald's challenge more defiant rung.

"Yet was thy spirit tuned to gentle themes
Sought in the haunts thy humble youth had known.
Our stern New England's hills and vales and streams, —
Thy tuneful idyls made them all their own.

"The wild flowers springing from thy native sod
Lent all their charms thy new-world song to fill, —
Gave thee the mayflower and the golden-rod
To match the daisy and the daffodil.

"In the brave records of our earlier time
A hero's deed thy generous soul inspired,
And many a legend, told in ringing rhyme,
The youthful soul with high resolve has fired.

"Not thine to lean on priesthood's broken reed;
No barriers caged thee in a bigot's fold;
Did zealots ask to syllable thy creed,
Thou saidst, 'Our Father,' and thy creed was told.

"Best loved and saintliest of our singing train,
Earth's noblest tributes to thy name belong.
A lifelong record closed without a stain,
A blameless memory shrined in deathless song.

"Lift from its quarried ledge a flawless stone;
Smooth the green turf, and bid the tablet rise,
And on its snow-white surface carve alone
These words, — he needs no more, — *Here Whittier lies*"

APPENDIX.

A. "THE KING'S MISSIVE."

In reply to a paper read before the Massachusetts Historical Society by Rev. Dr. George E. Ellis, criticising the historical accuracy of his ballad with the above title, Mr. Whittier sent this letter to the Boston "Advertiser" in March, 1881: —

A friend has called my attention to a paper read by Dr. Ellis before the Massachusetts Historical Society, upon the persecution of the Friends in New England of the seventeenth century, in which my poetic version of an incident of that period, the "King's Missive" to Governor Endicott, is criticised. It is not easy in a poem of the kind referred to to be strictly accurate in every detail, but I think the ballad has preserved with tolerable correctness the spirit, tone, and color of the incident and its time. At least such was my intention. Certainly, I did not profess to hold up that reprobate monarch, Charles II., as a consistent friend of toleration, or of any other Christian virtue. The Quakers of his time knew him too well to attribute his actions to any other than selfish motives. They were never deceived by his professions of liberality, as Baxter and his friend, "old Mr. Ash," were, when they wept for very joy over his gracious words and promises. They sought to obtain from him some relief from their sufferings, and did so in a few instances when it suited his caprice, or when the persecutors complained of happened to be Puritans.

The letter of the king commanded that further proceedings against the imprisoned Friends should be stayed, and that they should be sent to England for trial. To this Governor

Endicott promised implicit obedience. The prisoners were released from the jail, and they and their friends outside were for the first time permitted to meet together in Boston, and praise God for their deliverance. That the persecution did not cease is true. But ever after the hunted Quakers breathed more freely, and felt that the end of their long night of tribulation was near. That the prisoners were not sent to England was probably due to the fears of the governor and his advisers that their doings would not bear a legal investigation. The only way of evading the king's requisition was to have no prisoners in the jail. "Drake's History of Boston," page 357, says, "An order was issued for the discharge of the Quakers then in prison. William Salter was the prison-keeper. There were, a little previous to this, twenty-eight persons lying in Boston jail, one of whom, Wenlock Christison, was under sentence of death."

In Bryant and Gay's "History of the United States," vol. ii., page 197, it is stated that "William Salter, keeper of Boston jail, was at once ordered to release and discharge all the Quakers in his custody." In the journal of George Fox it is said, in relation to this matter, that "the passengers in the ship and the Friends in the town met together, and offered up praise and thanksgiving to God, who had so wonderfully delivered them out of the teeth of the devourer;" and that, while they were thus met, "in came a poor Friend, who, being sentenced by their bloody law to die, had lain some time in irons, expecting execution." Dr. Evans, in his carefully compiled "History of Friends in the Seventeenth Century," says, "The council issued an order to the keeper of the prison to set at liberty all the Quakers then in confinement." (Page 250.)

I think it will be seen that there *was* a "general jail delivery" in consequence of the king's demand; that the Friends met together and thanked God for their deliverance, and that "one appointed to die," and who had lain in irons expecting death, was with them. It has been said that Wenlock Christison was released before Shattuck's arrival, in consequence of his "recantation." He recanted nothing. He stated only that he found a freedom in his mind to depart

out of the jurisdiction, and that he did not know as he should ever come back. Mary Dyer left the colony under the same circumstances, and after a time felt herself called upon to return. It seems more than probable that Christison was not set at liberty until after the arrival of the king's message, for he would not have been permitted to remain in Boston one hour after liberation, and it appears that he was with the little company who met together in praise and thanksgiving.

It is true, and for the credit of human nature it should be stated, that the cruel enactments for whipping, branding, selling into slavery, and death on the gallows were distasteful to a considerable minority of the people of New England. Governor Winthrop of Connecticut remonstrated against the course of the Massachusetts authorities, as did also Saltonstall and Pike among the magistrates of the colony. But there is no evidence that the clergy, who were the instigators of these laws, faltered for a moment in their determination to enforce them, so far as their influence could be exerted upon the magistracy. Endicott, Bellingham, and Bradstreet needed no stimulus from them. There is not the slightest evidence that these men had abated one jot or tittle of their fixed determination to crush out and exterminate every germ of Quakerism. Nor can it be said that the persecution grew out of the "intrusion," "indecency," and "effrontery" of the persecuted.

It owed its origin to the settled purpose of the ministers and leading men of the colony to permit no difference of opinion on religious matters. They had banished the Baptists, and whipped at least one of them. They had hunted down Gorton and his adherents; they had imprisoned Dr. Child, an Episcopalian, for petitioning the General Court for toleration. They had driven some of their best citizens out of their jurisdiction, with Anne Hutchinson, and the gifted minister, Wheelwright. Any dissent on the part of their own fellow-citizens was punished as severely as the heresy of strangers.

The charge of "indecency" comes with ill grace from the authorities of the Massachusetts Colony. The first Quakers

who arrived in Boston, Ann Austin and Mary Fisher, were arrested on board the ship before landing, their books taken from them and burned by the constable, and they themselves brought before Deputy-Governor Bellingham, in the absence of Endicott. This astute magistrate ordered them to be stripped naked, and their bodies to be carefully examined, to see if there was not the Devil's mark on them as witches. They were then sent to the jail, their cell window was boarded up, and they were left without food or light, until the master of the vessel that brought them was ordered to take them to Barbadoes. When Endicott returned, he thought they had been treated too leniently, and declared that he would have had them whipped.

After this, almost every town in the province was favored with the spectacle of aged and young women stripped to the middle, tied to a cart-tail and dragged through the streets and scourged without mercy by the constable's whip. It is not strange that these atrocious proceedings, in two or three instances, unsettled the minds of the victims. Lydia Wardwell of Hampton, who, with her husband, had been reduced to almost total destitution by persecution, was summoned by the church of which she had been a member to appear before it to answer to the charge of non-attendance. She obeyed the call by appearing in the unclothed condition of the sufferers whom she had seen under the constable's whip. For this she was taken to Ipswich and stripped to the waist, tied to a rough post, which tore her bosom as she writhed under the lash, and severely scourged to the satisfaction of a crowd of lookers-on at the tavern. One, and only one, other instance is adduced in the person of Deborah Wilson of Salem. She had seen her friends and neighbors scourged naked through the street, among them her brother, who was banished on pain of death. She, like all Puritans, had been educated in the belief of the plenary inspiration of Scripture, and had brooded over the strange "signs" and testimonies of the Hebrew prophets. It seemed to her that the time had arrived for some similar demonstration, and that it was her duty to walk abroad in the disrobed condition to which her friends had been subjected, as a sign and warning to the

persecutors. Whatever of "indecency" there was in these cases was directly chargeable upon the atrocious persecution. At the door of the magistrates and ministers of Massachusetts must be laid the insanity of the conduct of these unfortunate women.

But Boston, at least, had no voluntary Godivas. The only disrobed women in its streets were made so by Puritan sheriffs and constables, who dragged them amidst jeering crowds at the cart-tail, stripped for the lash, which in one instance laid open with a ghastly gash the bosom of a young mother!

It is a remarkable proof of the purity of life among the early Friends that their enemies, while exhausting the language of abuse against them, pointed to no instances of licentiousness or immoral practice. However enthusiastic or extravagant, they "kept themselves unspotted from the world." Woman, from the Quaker standpoint, was regarded as man's equal and beloved companion, like him directly responsible to God, and free to obey the leadings of the Spirit of Truth. From the rise of the society to the present time the peace, purity, and peculiar sweetness of Quaker homes have been proverbial.

The charge that the Quakers who suffered were "vagabonds," and "ignorant, low fanatics," is unfounded in fact. Mary Dyer, who was executed, was a woman of marked respectability. She had been the friend and associate of Sir Henry Vane and the ministers Wheelwright and Cotton. The papers left behind by the three men who were hanged show that they were above the common class of their day in mental power and genuine piety. John Rous, who in execution of his sentence had his right ear cut off by the constable in the Boston jail, was of gentlemanly lineage, the son of Colonel Rous of the British army, and himself the betrothed of a high-born and cultivated young English lady. Nicholas Upsall was one of Boston's most worthy and substantial citizens, yet was driven in his age and infirmities, from his home and property, into the wilderness.

If the authorities were more severe in dealing with the Quakers than with other dissenters, it was because they

were more persistent in maintaining their rights of opinion. The persecutors were, on the whole, impartial in their intolerance. The same whip that scored the back of Holmes, the Baptist, fell on that of Wharton, the Quaker. The same decree of banishment was issued against Mary Dyer and Anne Hutchinson. The same jail door that was shut upon the twelve-year-old Quaker girl was closed also upon the learned and world-traveled Dr. Child, the Episcopalian.

The Friends have been accused of running upon the sword of the law held out against them, of glorying in persecution. This charge was urged against the early Christians. It was said of the martyr Ignatius, on his way to Rome, that he longed to come to the beasts that were to devour him; that he would invite them to tear him; nay, should they refuse to do so, he would force them. The good Emperor Marcus Antoninus expressed his dislike of the Christian sect, because of their "obstinacy in seeking death." It must be owned that the persecuted Quakers were more afraid of violating conscience than unrighteous law. They held duty paramount to any other consideration. They could die, but they could not deny the truth. To such "obstinacy" the world is largely indebted. The religious freedom of our age is the legacy of the heroic confessors, who suffered and died rather than yield their honest convictions. It was Quaker "obstinacy" and sturdy endurance which opened the jails of England, crowded with Presbyterians and Independents, among them the great names of Baxter and Bunyan. Baxter, who hated them with all the intensity of his nature, owns that the Quakers, by their perseverance in holding their religious meetings in defiance of penal laws and brutal mobs, took upon themselves the burden of persecution, which would otherwise have fallen on himself and his Presbyterian friends; and especially mentions with commendation the noble and successful plea of William Penn before the Recorder's Court of London, based on the fundamental liberties of Englishmen secured by the Great Charter.

The inheritors of the name and religious opinions of the suffering Friends of New England have no wish to deprive

the Puritan authorities of any proper extenuation or palliation of their severity. But in truth there is but one excuse for them — the hard and cruel spirit of the age in which they lived. They shared its common intolerance. With the single exception of the Friends, every sect in Christendom believed in the right of the magistrate to punish heresy. There were indeed individuals, and among the noblest of the age, who sympathized with the persecuted Friends, and exerted themselves for their relief — such men as Sydney and Vane, Milton and Marvel, Tillotson and Locke, Prince Rupert and Lord Herbert. But these were solitary exceptions.

For myself, I have always cheerfully admitted to its full extent this plea of universal intolerance, in extenuation of the New England ministers and magistrates. I do not doubt that they regarded the Quaker doctrine of the Divine Immanence as a fatal heresy. They could bring no charge of immorality against the men and women whom they whipped and hanged. They could not charge them with taking up arms in rebellion, or countenancing in any way a forcible resistance to even unjust law. They could not deny that when left unmolested they were industrious and temperate, peaceable and kind neighbors and citizens.

The tendency of Quakerism to promote peace, good order, and worldly prosperity was proved by the fact that three of the colonies, Rhode Island, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania, under the Quaker governors, Coddington, Archdale, and Penn, were exceptional examples of peace, order, and progress.

Dr. Ellis has been a very generous, as well as ingenious defender of the Puritan clergy and government, and his labors in this respect have the merit of gratuitous disinterestedness. Had the very worthy and learned gentleman been a resident in the Massachusetts colony in 1660, one of his most guarded doctrinal sermons would have brought down upon him the wrath of clergy and magistracy. His Socinianism would have seemed more wicked than the "inward light" of the Quakers; and, had he been as "doggedly obstinate" as Servetus at Geneva (as I do him the

justice to think he would have been), he might have hung on the same gallows with the Quakers, or the same shears which clipped the ears of Holder, Rous, and Copeland might have shorn off his own.

I can assure him that in speaking on this subject I have always honestly endeavored to do justice to both parties. In the ballad to which he refers I think I have done so. In "Margaret Smith's Diary" I have gone to the extreme in finding excuse for John Norton himself. I find no fault with Dr. Ellis's championship of Endicott and his advisers. I only regret that, in attempting to vindicate them, he has done injustice to the sufferers, who he seems to think were at least quite as much to blame for being hanged as Endicott was for hanging them. We who inherit the faith and name of these noble men and women, who gave up home and life for freedom of worship, have no desire to be complimented at their expense. Holding their doctrine and reverencing their memories, we look back awed and humbled upon their heroic devotion to apprehended duty, and with gratitude to God for their example of obedience unto death.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

AMESBURY, 3*d mo.*, 22, 1881.

To this reply Dr. Ellis made a rejoinder in which he says that the missive of the king only suspended until the next court, but did not alter, the laws and proceedings of the magistrates, which they put in force afterwards "in all respects," save only as they limited to three the number of the towns through which a vagabond Quaker was to be whipped in getting him out of the jurisdiction; and the king wrote another letter the next year, in which he says he is not to be understood as wishing any indulgence to those persons commonly called Quakers. "We have found it necessary here to make a sharp law against them, and are well contented that you do the like there." This sentence occurs in the rejoinder: —

"He [Mr. Whittier] says that I seem to think that the Quakers were as much to blame for being hanged as Endicott was for hanging them. I might not put the matter in that way, but the most candid and deliberate judgment I can form on the sad episode is, that both parties were equally chargeable with wrong and folly."

Mr. Whittier continued the discussion, and concluded it, so far as he was concerned, with the following letter:

I find in the "Advertiser" of this morning a rejoinder from Dr. Ellis to my communication of the 28th instant. I do not know that any further remarks on my part are really necessary, but I would like to notice briefly one or two points. Dr. Ellis reiterates his belief that no prisoners were released in consequence of the "King's Missive." If he is right in his opinion that there were no Friends in the jail at the time, the reply of Governor Endicott to the king's messenger, Shattuck, would have been prompt and decisive that His Majesty had been misinformed, as there were no such persons condemned or imprisoned in the colony. Instead of this, he consulted his deputy and assured Shattuck that the king's command should be obeyed.

In answer to my suggestion that the imprisoned Friends were not sent to England for trial agreeably to the king's demand, from a fear that the action of the colonial magistrates would not bear a legal investigation, Dr. Ellis states that a year previous certain prisoners were released on condition of their departure in an English ship. The cases are not parallel. The people thus sent off had no means of bringing their cause before a British court, and the Massachusetts authorities well knew there was no danger of their enactments and penalties being tested by English law. But the king's letter to Endicott is an imperative demand: "If there be any of those people called Quakers amongst you already condemned to suffer death or *other corporal punishment*, or that are imprisoned and obnoxious to such condemnation, you are to forbear to proceed any further therein; and that

you forthwith send the said persons, *whether condemned or imprisoned, over unto this our kingdom with the respective crimes or offenses laid to their charge*, to the end that such course may be taken with them here as shall be agreeable to our laws and their demerits." A literal compliance with this demand would have led to a full disclosure before English tribunals of the cruel and unwarranted proceedings of the colonial government. Hence the only safe course for the governor and his advisers was to liberate all the Friends who were in confinement, and then declare there were no such persons as the missive designated in the jail at Boston.

If, as Dr. Ellis avers, the king's letter had no effect of releasing prisoners or staying for the time, at least, the severity of the persecution, the two delegates of the colony sent to England in consequence of that letter must have been guilty of falsehood. Simon Bradstreet positively stated that *there was no longer any persecution in New England*, and John Norton confirmed it. It is true they made the statement under some fear that the father of Robinson, one of the persons executed, might hold them accountable as parties to his son's murder. George Fox in his journal says that "some of the old Royalists were earnest with Friends to have prosecuted them, but we told them we left them to the Lord, to whom vengeance belonged."

Dr. Ellis seems to find in the incivility and strong language of the early Friends an excuse for the severity of the laws against them. The language of controversy in that day was not remarkable for courtesy and delicacy, and I admit that the speech of the hunted and outlawed Quakers had a good deal of the old Saxon energy. Something should be pardoned in them, however, when their opponents' lack of argument was supplemented by halter and whipping-post. In point of fact, in decorous language and Christian charity towards those who differed from them, the Quakers of that day were quite as exemplary as the magistrates and ministers who persecuted them. It was a coarse, hard age, in which nobody was mealy-mouthed. The Puritan himself was scarcely the modern ideal of a saint. We can imagine how he seemed to his Rhode Island, Dutch, and Acadian

neighbors. There is abundant evidence, too, that his Zion had internal troubles of its own, with the bitterness of which such "outside barbarians" as Quakers and Baptists "intermedelled not." Any one who reads the careful study of a Puritan neighborhood in the first volume of Upham's "History of Salem Witchcraft" may see how strife, envyings, covetousness, and bitter family feuds rankled beneath the outward show of church fellowship. Cotton Mather's testimony in this respect is noteworthy.

He tells us that "the rebuilding or removing of meeting-houses has tempted neighbors from lifting pure hands without wrath in those houses; inclosing of commons hath made neighbors that should have been as sheep to bite and devour one another; disposal of little matters in the militia has made people almost ready to fall on one another with force of arms; little piques between leading men in a town have misled all the neighbors far and near into most unaccountable party-making." He tells also of "inordinate passions, sinful hearts and hatreds among church members themselves, who abound with evil surmisings, uncharitable and unrighteous censure, back-bitings and tale hearing and telling." Surely it would seem that in such a community a slight infusion of Quakerism could not do much harm.

But enough of this. A son of New England, proud of her history, I take no pleasure in dwelling on the sad and tragic story of the Quaker persecution. Of all that is true and noble in the character of the Puritans, there is no warmer admirer than myself. But for the sake of vindicating them from the charge of that intolerance which they shared with nearly all Christendom, I cannot undertake to justify or excuse persecution by vilifying its victims. As heartily as my friend Dr. Ellis I love Boston, — the city of the Pilgrims, — the tokens and monuments of its historic renown, — Faneuil Hall, the Old South, all its memorable places and associations; and, if he cannot sympathize with, he will at least respect, the feeling of reverence with which I regard even its beautiful Common, knowing that hidden somewhere under its green turf are the graves of the Quaker martyrs.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

B. PRESERVATION OF WHITTIER HOMESTEADS.

Soon after the death of Mr. Whittier, the late Hon. James H. Carleton purchased the homestead at East Haverhill, and transferred it to a board of trustees, composed of members of the Whittier Club of Haverhill. In the deed of gift, Mr. Carleton expressed the wish that the natural features of the landscape might be preserved, the buildings restored as nearly as possible to their original condition, and access to them given to the public, "that thereby the memory of and love for the poet and the man may be cherished and perpetuated." Mr. Alfred A. Ordway was named as president of the board of trustees, and he has taken charge of the restoration of the house and grounds, his aim being to bring the estate into a condition as nearly as possible resembling that of eighty years ago. He has found and restored to their old places many of the articles of furniture which were in the house in Whittier's youth. The house is now open to the public on certain days of each week, and thousands of visitors make pilgrimage to the scene of "Snow-Bound," an electric railway which passes the spot making it easy of access.

Mr. Whittier's Amesbury home, left by will to his niece, is now occupied by the grandnephew to whom he addressed the poem "A Name." Several rooms are kept substantially as he left them, and are open to visitors. The little "garden room" which he used as a study, and in which he received his friends and guests, retains its books and pictures in the places he assigned them. The portraits of his mother and sister remain in the parlor. In this house, also, is preserved the desk upon which "Snow-Bound" and most of the poems and letters of his middle life were written.

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